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New Statesman

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TORY NIGHTMARES

Brighton '84: Mary Holland: IRA tactics • Andrew Roth: the new Tories • George Tremlett's personal view

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New Statesman

Cover drawing: John Minnion

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New Statesman

Vol 108 No 2796 19 October 1984

Mrs Thatcher's war aims failing

BACK IN AUGUST Chancellor Lawson described the money that the miners' strike was costing the country as a 'worthwhile investment'. At that stage the running total for the civil war to defeat 'the enemy within' was around £1.4 billion.

The strike is now going into its 33rd week. That total cost must now have risen to well over £2 billion. It is made up of sales lost for ever to the National Coal Board, the extra cost of using more oil to generate electricity, lost revenues to British Rail and British Steel (which the government will have to make up in one way or another), extra social security payments, the cost of additional policing and the administration of the courts, and the loss of taxes and National Insurance payments on the earnings of miners who would otherwise be in work.

It was clear what Mr Lawson meant in that context by an 'investment'. The return was to be the smashing of Arthur Scargill. Now, over two months later, it is equally clear that, whatever the eventual outcome of the miners' strike, the whole episode has inflicted serious moral, economic and political damage on Mrs Thatcher's government. The increasingly shrill and desperate utterances this week from government ministers make it clear that they are finally also being forced to look this truth in the face. Mrs Thatcher's post-bomb Brighton speech, which used rhetorical elision to suggest that striking miners were essentially identical to IRA bombers, was the clearest public indication that the government has lost control of its tactics in the miners' dispute.

Let's just look at the miners' strike through Mrs Thatcher's eyes. The campaign was conceived as a *blitzkreig* to take out Scargill. In these terms it has been a disaster. The idea, which Nigel Lawson personally sold to Mrs Thatcher, was to bring in General MacGregor to do to Scargill what he had already done to Bill Sirs and the steel industry. The tactics were to abandon consultation and regional management and to push through a centrally ordained cost cutting exercise with a very short timescale attached to it. A wedge was to be driven between Scargill and the radicals in the NUM leadership by offering unprecedentedly high redundancy terms and guarantees of lifetime employment.

Arthur Scargill has never made a secret of the fact that he has wanted an industrial and political showdown with the government. The present dispute, however, is taking place because Mrs Thatcher and her lieutenants decided to pick a fight with Scargill in 1984 in the belief that he would not have the support of the majority of the members of his union. Government, especially Tory government, is about achieving political objectives within given budgets. Thirty-three weeks and £2 billion later, it is clear that the government blundered.

IN THE PROCESS there have been a number of unpleasant side effects for the government. The alleged SupermacGregor has been revealed for what he clearly always was — a transatlantic septuagenarian with very little experience of or feel for British industrial relations and public relations. He will leave the British coal industry in a significantly greater mess than when he first came to it. MacGregor's regime has achieved its unique distinction of actually driving the traditionally conservative

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managers' union NACODS into an overwhelming majority vote for a strike. That speaks of a quite exceptional degree of tactical incompetence. With winter coming on, NACODS literally have the government over a barrel in this coming week.

The Whitehall propaganda machine is working flat out to pretend that a NACODS strike call next week would not now be fully obeyed. But everyone knows that this is just whistling in the dark to keep spirits up. A NACODS strike would mean power cuts and other forms of electricity rationing within a matter of weeks. And that would be the dreaded formal admission that another Tory Prime Minister had taken on the NUM and lost.

There is another level at which the miners' strike in 1984 will make a turning point in British political history. Arthur Scargill's personal political goals may well be more revolutionary than those of the majority of the members of the NUM whose interests he represents. But he has their mass support because they feel under attack from a government that neither understands nor cares about the problems of an industry in crisis and rapid transition. The NUM is the first substantial group since 1979 that has turned and fought its ground against the doctrinaire neo-liberalism that has been at the heart of this government's domestic and economic policies. The miners' achievement is that any victory that Mrs Thatcher can contrive to claim in the end out of this dispute will now be pyrrhic. □

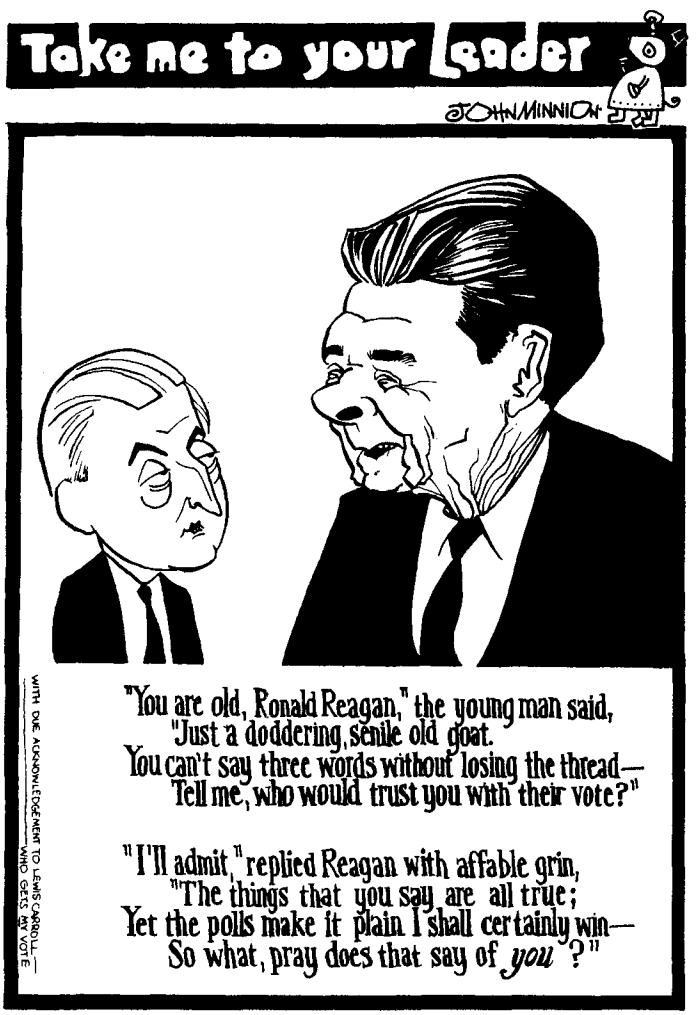
Blind dogmas revisited

IT IS A SHAME shared equally by professional economists and the media that Mrs Thatcher's 'monetarist' economic policy was not laughed out of court long before it inflicted its irreversible damage on British industry and society.

Academic economists and Treasury civil servants who knew that it was simplistic nonsense by and large said so once and then gave up, either out of intellectual disdain for such kindergarten argument, or out of fear that public disagreement would put their Social Science Research Council grants, or their careers, at risk. The media by and large accepted the ludicrous Thatcherite premises by unquestioningly reporting a lower Public Sector Borrowing Requirement as 'good news' and higher money supply figures as 'bad' and by allowing the quite unsupported assertion that 'There Is No Alternative' to pass unchallenged into public consciousness.

Now, before our very eyes, a second comparable bit of economic mumbo jumbo is being proclaimed. It is that the present levels of unemployment are the fault of monopoly trade unions, the excessive level of real wages and the lack of incentive for entrepreneurs. (It is, as Professor Nove wrote mockingly in the *New Statesman* last week, the proposition that the rich do not work because they are not rich enough, and the poor because they are not poor enough.)

The theme that people are pricing themselves out of jobs, and that what is needed is a cut in real wages, was the central part of Chancellor Lawson's message last week in Brighton. He has to find some excuse for the fact that five years of Thatcherite economic policy have failed to produce the inflation-free economic growth that was so confidently predicted. He also has to find some reason why the British economy under Thatcher has had such a disastrously different experience from the American economy under Reagan, where there has been a quite unprecedented surge in the creation of new jobs.


Take me to your Leader
JOHN MINNION
"You are old, Ronald Reagan," the young man said,
"Just a doddering, senile old goat.
You can't say three words without losing the thread—
Tell me, who would trust you with their vote?"
"I'll admit," replied Reagan with affable grin,
"The things that you say are all true;
Yet the polls make it plain I shall certainly win—
So what, pray does that say of *you*?"
WITH DUE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO LEWIS CARROLL—WHO GETS MY VOTE

THERE IS ABOUT as little evidence to support the Lawson 'real wage' theory as there was in 1979 to support the Howe 'money supply' theory. Certainly it is not, as the Chancellor is asserting, a proven fact that a cut in the general level of real wages (even supposing that it could be achieved, socially and politically) would bring the number of new jobs on offer into balance with the number of those seeking work.

The Chancellor's motives for putting forward the theory are clear enough. But there is no excuse for the media to start playing his game. But it has started. There was a disgracefully partisan example of this last Sunday on ITV's *Weekend World*. Its report on 'Unemployment in Britain', in preparation for an interview with the Chancellor this Sunday, appeared to accept the 'real wage' theory — hook, line and sinker.

The whole tone of the report is captured in these words, put into the mouth of the presenter, Brian Walden:

> In theory, capitalist economies like Britain's should always enjoy full employment. The demand for labour from businessmen should always precisely balance the supply of labour from workers. What ensures that the balance is maintained is wages. In other words, the price of labour.

Weekend World has no right to assert, like Lawson, as if it was fact that labour markets ever have or should operate in line with such a model. And it was equally misleading for Walden to end with the promise that next week he would bring us a 'report from America, where methods similar to those we have outlined today (i.e. weakening trade unions and cutting real wages) have shown considerable success in reducing unemployment there'.

Without question the United States is a more efficient and responsive economy than ours. But we must not allow Mrs Thatcher and her second Chancellor to take us into a second dark age of economic self-destruction by failing to assert the overriding truth that overwhelmingly the most important factor in creating jobs is economic growth. The Americans have had it, with a far larger budget deficit, viz public sector borrowing requirement, than Tory dogma will allow. We have not. □

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MAXWELL 'NEARING EXPULSION' FROM OXFORD LABOUR PARTY

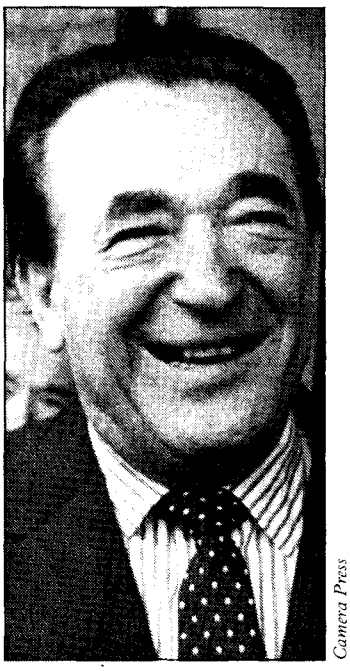
EXPULSION of Robert Maxwell, publisher of Mirror Group Newspapers, from membership of Oxford East Constituency Labour Party is likely to be attempted next month according to local party and trades union sources. He would be free, though, to contest any such decision in Labour NEC or at Conference next year. DAVID LEPPARD reports

MAXWELL having failed, it is alleged, to respond to four calls since July to present himself before local Oxford Labour leaders to answer disciplinary questions, this Monday 15 October was apparently set as the final and fifth date for such a meeting — but he was out of the country.

The executive committee of Oxford East Constituency Labour Party has accordingly, we understand, been given power to forward a recommendation after its next meeting (5 November). This would go to the 150 member general committee, and from there to the next full party meeting, set for 20 November. Both executive and general committee are said to be firmly in a mood to see Maxwell's removal.

Though he's a very long-time Labour supporter (since the Second World War), and served as Labour MP for the old constituency of Buckingham in 1964-70 and headed up Labour National Fund Raising Foundation (1960-69), Maxwell is under fire in Oxford for appearing to recommend in 1983 that local people vote against the Labour-controlled city council and for an aggressive attitude towards trades unions.

These constituency party moves come shortly after a motion to expel Maxwell from the Labour Party was



Camera Press

Mirror Group owner Robert Maxwell

sponsored in Blackpool Conference by the two biggest print unions, Sogat '82 and the NGA, and was defeated at the procedural stage. The Conference motion had followed Maxwell's decision to press ahead as new publisher of the Mirror Group (and in contrast with 'Tiny' Rowland of the *Observer*) with a legal action for £2 million damages against print trades unionists which had been launched by the Mirror Group's previous owners (IPC).

Pergamon and after

Hostility to Maxwell in Oxford East appears to have been confined until lately to guerrilla skirmishing by union branches of the party, their feelings against him dating back to the bitter industrial dispute in 1981 at his Pergamon Press in Headington, Oxford.

Now it seems that a majority of the Oxford East executive committee including chairperson Carole Roberts are affronted by what they see as one member's disproportionate financial clout with effects at the political level. His purchase of Oxford United football club in January 1982 appears to have led to matters coming to a head.

Prior to last year's local elections Maxwell and the Labour-controlled Oxford City Council had been haggling for some time over a new site for the club, the council refusing to sell a site at Marston. Two days before the May '83 elections Maxwell as chair of Oxford United apparently suggested locals register their 'displeasure' by 'voting accordingly' — which the local party, though Maxwell denied it vigorously, took to be an invitation to vote Conservative.

Whatever the reason, Labour's Arthur Dent was defeated by 50 votes in Maxwell's own Headington ward. Concerted moves to expel Robert Maxwell from Oxford East can be traced to that moment. ●

Customs & Excise seek to interview Gay's the Word

IN THE WAKE of the seizure notices involving 132 titles and 2,265 volumes served on 8 October (see *NS* 12 October) Customs & Excise have asked to interview directors of Gay's the Word bookshop, of London's Bloomsbury.

It's expected that this cannot be before a conference between the bookshop and counsel set for 26 October, due to be attended by barrister Geoffrey Robertson, considered Britain's leading authority in this area of the law.

On 1 November the shop is to hold an 'Open Day' after usual business hours intended to demonstrate its nature as a community bookshop and not the 'hard core' outlet some might be led to infer from the scale of Customs operations against it, since homes of directors and the shop's premises were raided on 10 April.

One of the principal American suppliers to the bookshop prior to current seizures, Giovanni's Room* of Philadelphia, reports that some of its lesbian and gay publications have for the first time been seized by Customs in Australia — but the UK remains the sole country in Europe with which it has trouble.

Gay's the Word are contesting the seizure notices since 10 April (18 in all), but a little-understood point of Customs law is that the Customs and Excise are under no set time-limit before they bring the cases to court. Consignments under seizure notice, estimated to be worth some £10,000, are accordingly still in limbo, neither condemned nor available to the shop's customers.

They have nonetheless been almost entirely paid for by the bookshop. New orders cannot, however, be placed, even though Customs' opinion of the stock is untested in the courts. There's a knock-on effect on Giovanni's Room's business, which has shelved for the time being plans to open an agency in the UK — just as Gay's the Word has had to shelve expansion plans formed in 1983.

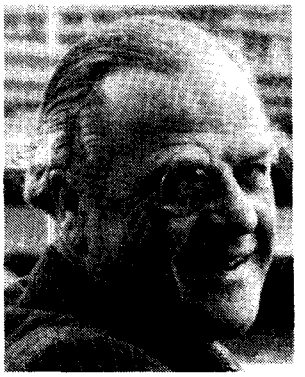
Andrew Lumsden

*Named for the famous American gay writer and black civil rights activist James Baldwin, whose novel *Giovanni's Room* was published in the 1950s.

Belgrano fog

Questions over Kershaw as the pilot . . .

IT WAS DISCLOSED this week that evidence by Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine to the Commons foreign affairs committee about the sinking of the Belgrano will almost certainly be given in secret session on 7 November. He is to be questioned about the documents allegedly sent to Tom Dalyell MP (subsequently printed in the NS*) which were returned by foreign affairs committee chair Sir Anthony Kershaw to Heseltine, resulting in*



Tory stalwart Sir Anthony Kershaw

the charges now made against civil servant Clive Ponting.

The proposed role of Sir Anthony Kershaw, chairing an in camera *cross-examination of Heseltine, continues to raise questions. As the* NS *has commented he recently stoutly defended the government's decision to sink the cruiser, consistently with his views expressed during the Falklands war, and indeed with his action in returning the papers.*

As Mrs Thatcher came under attack in the House of Commons two days after the sinking of the Belgrano on 2 May 1982, Kershaw immediately came to her defence asking 'how can anyone maintain that such a ship, armed in that way, and accompanied by those destroyers, was not a threat to our forces?'

Two days later Kershaw associated himself with a particularly aggressive group of Tory backbenchers, including Sir Patrick Wall, in demanding that the government use 'whatever measures should prove necessary' to protect British ships. This was widely interpreted as requiring the government to take the war to the Argentine mainland. Indeed the Times *story was headlined 'Bomb Argentine Air Bases say senior Tory MPs'.*

Roger Price

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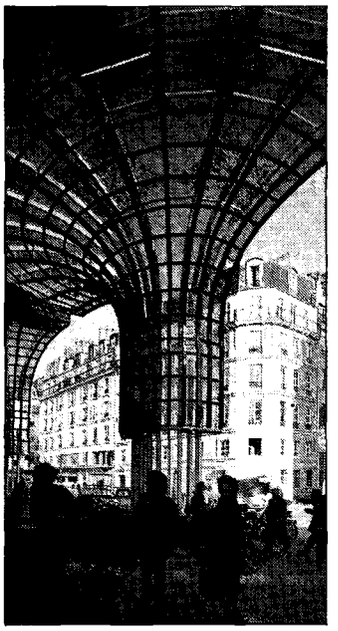
GLC on Paris visit finds who's *really* out of step

GLC OFFICERS were in France last week for a conference on world cities, 'Metropolis 84', organised by the regional council of the Ile-de-France and attended by some 800 delegates representing 31 cities from around the globe.

The main lesson, regardless of the political complexion of the delegates' urban or national governments, seemed to be that it's Thatcher who's out of line with her attempted abolition of the central planning capacity represented by the GLC. Even Los Angeles and New York weren't talking about whether the public sector should have a positive role — only about how to make it effective.

George Nicholson, GLC planning chair, described London as 'a city at war with itself' as he heard about the planning achievements of Ile-de-France from its regional chair Michel Girault, a right-winger, and from another right-winger Jacques Chirac, mayor of Paris.

The French local government chiefs described how they are building 2,000 housing units on the eastern fringes of Paris at Bercy, after opening up a sports complex there — and how on their side of the Channel the state is financing construction of eight major monuments including three museums and a new opera. The conference itself was designed to recognise that in major cities spectacular initiatives are required if both the quality of life and economic foundations are to be improved.



Spectacular metro structure at Paris's Chatelet-Les Halles

Delegates from other world cities spoke of their 'amazement' that a British government should seek to 'sabotage' elected bodies at the metropolitan level when positive planning is so urgently required for London as for other world-scale cities.

Anne Corbett

Indecent assault: the latest statistics

THE NEWLY-RELEASED Criminal Statistics in England and Wales *(Cmnd 9349) shows a declining trend in the number of indecent assaults on males recorded by police as 'notifiable sexual offences'. As against 2,633 such cases recorded in 1977, there were 2,178 recorded in 1983 (Table 2.9 of the report).*

The 'clear-up rate' in 1983 (viz, proportion of notified allegations of indecent assault on men in which the police found or claimed to have found the offender) was 85 per cent. This compares with a 59 per cent clear-up rate in 1983 in notified allegations of indecent assault on females. The numbers of notified indecent assaults on females remain fairly constant, at 10,833 in 1983 against 11,048 in 1977.

The same report shows that notified cases of alleged rape of women have risen from 1,015 in 1977 to 1,334 in 1983, with a clear-up rate in 1983 of 67 per cent. It's taken for granted, however, that rape is a seriously under-reported offense, whose gravity and occurrence is under-represented in the Criminal Statistics, *often from victims' fear of police and courts.*

Information on the subjects of indecent assault isn't given (statistical information), but Sexual Offences, Consent & Sentencing, *Home Office Research Study No 54, published 1979, showed that at that date only 12 per cent of victims in convictions for indecent assault on males were aged over 15. The comparable figure for indecent assaults on females is 30 per cent.*

The under 15 year old victims in cases of convictions for indecent assault on males turned out on the evidence presented in court to have implied consent to the sexual act in a very high proportion of cases, but weren't eligible (under the age-of-consent provisions in the 1956 Sexual Offences Act) to give consent in law.

James Renny

MISCELLANY

Treasure in heaven

Our fogeyish contemporary the *Spectator* has missed a trick with its new treasure hunt, whose prizes (promised in the issue of 13 October) are 'valuable aquatints . . . Super Club BA tickets . . . the DNB . . . champagne.' A place in the kingdom of Heaven could have been promised, which would make even millionaire bingo look like short change. For we have before us in this office, as they must have in theirs, a press release announcing that Christ has been living in 'the Asian community of London under an ordinary Muslim name' since 1977. He's waiting to be approached 'by sufficiently influential — and therefore credible — representatives of the media'. Caroline Moore, who sets the *Spectator* hunt, is certainly such a representative, and surely hers are the right readers to find Christ. First clue: ring 01-485 1739.

Usual offices

The *NS* editorial secretary reckons she's responsible for the loss of one tree per day as great chunks of the post hit the trash can, but one of the most bizarre circulars to get dumped this week was from Strutt & Parker, the top people's estate agents. They were letting us know that we can make an offer in excess of £275,000 for the remaining 97 years of a 99 year lease on Borthwick castle 'in a romantic setting' close to Edinburgh. 'It is an E type' (??) 'built in 1430, has a minstrel gallery, garrison room, and private chapel, and dungeons now used as a wine cellar'. It also has a 20 ft wide fireplace. For burning press releases no doubt. Actually it does rather sound like the *Spectator*'s sort of thing . . .

Nothing in that one

Our appeal (last week) for some kindly BBC person to say whether our reader could have heard aright in claiming that the first BBC broadcast after the sinking of the Belgrano *said the cruiser was sailing away has been answered. Anon of the BBC writes that s/he was on duty that night in May 1982 and — enclosing the relevant transcript — says 'there was no information forthcoming about* Belgrano's *direction'. Sorry! But worth an enquiry.*

Ana Gram writes (2):

This has got to stop, or there'll be bloodshed with the *Weekend Comp* team at the back of the paper who do the real thing. But quietly, shhh, don't breathe a word, anagrams have come in for Roy Hattersley, in the wake of last week's on Neil Kinnock ('I knock Lenin') from readers Peter Hill and Davy Jones. They're very flattering to the Dep. Lead. In fact the anagrams are identical. Mr Hill's handwritten poem runs:

Roy Hattersley piles words on words
And lager upon lager

(No, beg his pardon, that should read 'layer upon layer')

But he — I know it sounds absurd —
Can be: THE TORY SLAYER!

And Mr Jones rhapsodises:

I am the Tory slayer
Through and through.
I have a socialistic
point of view.
I'm sometimes called a pinko
But behind
'Roy Hattersley' 'the Tory slayer'
You will find.

Next week: Gerald Kaufman

Only a reds alert?

*The fact that we ran an item in this column (5 October) about police eavesdropping and video surveillance of the TUC's Brighton meet, and warned of what this might mean for peaceful protestors at the then-forthcoming Conservative conference, seems to gain in significance following the IRA Brighton abomination of 12 October. Sussex chief constable Roger Birch was quoted immediately after the bombing as saying (*The Times *13 October) that so far as his own planning was concerned 'it was reasonable in view of recent events that one of the most likely things that would happen would be problems with demonstrators'. Local concern, as expressed in the radical monthly* Brighton Voice *and by Brighton Labour councillor Steve Bassam, has long been that Birch has Lefties-under-the-beds obsessions. Why, they are currently asking, has nothing been done about four demonstrators allegedly seen in National Front uniform during an NF Brighton march of 22 September, an offence under Section I (I) of the Public Order Act 1936?*

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Is Depo Provera still being incautiously used?

IT SEEMS that plenty still remains to be done about inadequate explanations and information given to women about the possible effects of the contraceptive Depo Provera. The Health Ministry wouldn't at first licence it, but further clarifications about its use are urgently needed. PHIL COHEN reports

THE CONTROVERSIAL injectable contraceptive Depo Provera (DP) is still being routinely administered to pregnant women in hospital maternity units up and down the country despite official warnings of its possible harmful effects on menstruation and breastfeeding.

Community Rights Project, which has just published a booklet called *Who Needs Depo Provera?*, is conducting a national survey of every maternity unit — which includes discovering how far women are offered the chance to give their 'informed consent' to the use of DP, as required by a new Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) license.

The results are still being collated but replies from large general hospitals, many with a high black and Asian populations, already indicate that pregnant women are *still* being given the drug without proper information about side-effects, under medical pressure to have it, and even with misleading information.

A government inquiry panel which reported in April this year approved a long-term license for DP, but recommended 'caution' in its use directly after pregnancy because of increased risk of heavy bleeding. It said too that for women breastfeeding it should not be given in the first six weeks, since little research has been done on long-term effects on the child.

Yet one hospital information form sent to the survey team shows a woman being given a DP injection to stop her becoming pregnant for three months, and thus safe against rubella, and asserts 'this injected contraceptive will not affect breastfeeding'.

'Large weight gains'

Another DP consent form says 'naturally I understand that my periods may be upset, but that my future health will not be damaged,' — which directly contradicts the experiences of 100 women in letters to the Co-ordinating Group on DP, who talked of gaining large amounts of weight over months, even years; or irregular bleeding; hair loss; depression and losing interest in sex.

One rubella vaccination consent form is a rubber stamp type which merely mentions that an 'injectable contraceptive' will be given along with the rubella jab. Beverley Beech of the Community Rights Project gives us her view that DP should be banned in all maternity units because of its dangers.

The author of *Who Needs Depo Provera?*, Marge Berer, says that new stiffer instructions on the use of DP haven't yet been sent out, and that an information sheet on DP for women that the government inquiry panel recommended should accompany each container is still being prepared — but by the manufacturers Upjohn themselves, rather than by the DHSS or an independent body.

Camera Press

Clarke first turned the drug down

Health Minister Kenneth Clarke originally *refused* a long-term license for DP in 1982 then reversed his decision. The drug is used worldwide and refusal would have had disastrous implications for the drug industry. Berer's new booklet says the new license specifically limits DP to being a last-resort method of contraception for use when a woman is fully aware of the advantages and disadvantages.

It also calls for information about the drug to be 'translated into a woman's native language' and for a minimum two days reflection period outside the medical environment, when a woman can reflect about the pros and cons. A specific consent procedure for those such as the mentally ill who may not be able to give consent on their own, and for DP not to be used in the immediate post-pregnancy period, are two further demands. ●

The £1 booklet and further information on DP are available from the Community Rights Project, 157 Waterloo Rd, London SE1 8XF. Tel 01-928 0080.

MINERS PICKETS ROLL CALL (3)

Total of arrests to date*: 7,273

*from 14 March to 15 October 1984. Exclusive of arrests of supporters on street collections etc

IDENTIFICATION OF POLICE

September. Sunderland. Labour councillor Bernard Walsh forces police to give up an unofficial surveillance post on top of a block of council flats near Wearmouth colliery.

September. South Yorks. Kevin Barron MP (Labour, Rother Valley) alleges assault by police whose numbers were hidden under boiler suits. Police explain that the absence of identification was an 'oversight'.

MINERS LOCKED IN

18 September. St Helens. 14 striking miners allegedly locked by police into the NUM office at Sutton Manor pit for 45 minutes. Merseyside police say they have no knowledge of the incident.

MEANWHILE BACK IN THE CITIES . . .

Alarm rises about the effect on crime-prevention and 'clean-up rates' of the loss of police strengths round the country to picket-line duties. The London Group of Labour MPs claim **(September)** that a 7 per cent increase in the crime rate in the capital in the first 6 months of 1984 is linked to the deployment of 1,000 Met officers in the miners' dispute. A *Sunday Times* enquiry (also **September)** finds that every week as many as 8,000 men are drafted into mining areas, cutting strengths on some forces by over 10 per cent. A number of chief constables publicly blame a general rise in crime rates on the dispute. Sir Philip Knights, chief constable of West Midlands, admits **(3 October)** that response to 999 calls has slowed.

EURO-PARLIAMENT

September. County Durham. EuroMP Stephen Hughes (Labour, County Durham) decides to raise in the European Parliament the order by Derwentside magistrates that a striking miner found guilty of taking £1.80 of open cast site coal be fined £100 with £20 costs.

IN THE COURTS

Home Office figures of **11 September** indicate that, as of that date, 52 per cent of charges brought against arrested pickets were for 'breach of the peace'. 24 per cent charged with obstructing a police officer, 11 per cent with obstructing the highway, 10 per cent with criminal damage, and 6 per cent with assault on the police.

As of **11 September**, 75 per cent of those charged had not yet had their cases heard in court. Of the 1,386 cases which had been heard, 19 per cent resulted in acquittals. Guilty verdicts resulted in 26 custodial sentences (longest 9 months), 5 detention centre orders, and 9 detentions in police custody. 69 per cent of those sentenced received fines, of which some one in three were for sums above £100.

PRISON

11 September. Worksop. Home Secretary warns strikers in 'jackboot speech' that 'jackboot methods' could result in offences carrying a potential life sentence. **Doncaster.** Five miners and two other youths aged 17-24 put in custody for between 3 and 6 months for criminal damage and insulting words and behaviour.

20 September. Chesterfield. Three striking miners jailed for 3 months on an 1841 charge of 'besetting workmen' after arrest on a picket line.

24 September. Bolton. Striking miner jailed for 3 months (plus further 6 months suspended sentence) for arson resulting in destruction of £35,000 coach used to ferry working miners.

EXPERIENCE OF SUPPORTERS

September. London. Managers of Sainsbury stores accused of calling in police to move on persons making street collections for striking miners in Hackney, Stamford Hill, and Hornchurch. Members of Walpole Labour Party had been stopped in **July** from collecting for miners food parcels outside a Sainsbury's in West Ealing on the grounds that they were causing an obstruction.

1 September. Derry. Five arrested by RUC for collecting on behalf of striking Notts miners despite giving a month's notice of their intentions, as had been stated was necessary on an earlier occasion when two collectors were arrested by the RUC.

21 September. London. Newspaper seller in South Woodford, same pitch for 10 years, told to move on and threatened with arrest for obstruction. Had been collecting for striking miners for 4 months with no previous trouble.

29 September. London. Two Harrow East Labour Party members arrested while collecting for striking miners in Pinner. Had previously collected in Harrow and Wealdstone without interference from police.

Birmingham. Angry shoppers hiss police for trying to stop a Midland Red Banner theatre group performance in support of striking miners in the city centre. NCCL observers confirm that the troupe were busking, not collecting, and this was allowed by the by-laws. Street concert by four musicians from the Welsh National Opera orchestra also given, in front of a poster reading 'Musicians Support the Miners'.

Please send any information on striking miners, their families and supporters to **Miners Pickets Roll Call**, at the **New Statesman.**

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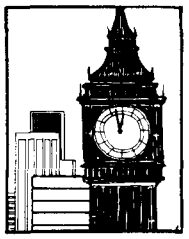

PETER KELLNER

The futile quest for 'business us usual'

'NOW IT MUST BE business as usual'. Thus Mrs Thatcher in her speech last Friday to the Conservative Party conference, 12 hours after the IRA's bomb had detonated inside the Grand Hotel. It is a statement that looks less satisfactory the longer you stare at it.

For a start, 'business as usual' has failed to bring peace to Northern Ireland, or to provide adequate security for British politicians. Sir Anthony Berry was the third Westminster MP to be killed by the IRA in the past six years. Nobody now expects cabinet ministers ever to be as easily accessible at future party conferences. At Brighton's Grand Hotel, and at Blackpool's Imperial, it can never be 'business as usual' again.

Nor, more generally, is it sensible or desirable for the government — any government — to pretend that violence makes no difference to political decisions. If the response to both republican and unionist violence over the past 15 years had always been 'business as usual', there would today be no British army in Ulster, no direct rule, no plastic bullets and no Diplock courts. As a matter of historical fact, Westminster's response to the IRA has never been 'business as usual', but 'if that's your game, we shall move heaven and earth to beat you'.

We can go further. Brute force, of which last Friday's bomb was a particularly gruesome example, inevitably plays a significant role in almost all big political decisions. In her speech to the Conservatives, Mrs Thatcher described the agreement reached with China over the future of Hong Kong as 'an important diplomatic success'. Indeed it was. But it was also a graceful surrender to the inevitable.

Come 1997 and Britain would be unable to resist China, if the Peoples' Republic chose to invade the colony. The deal that has now been done has nothing to do with saving democracy in Hong Kong — the people there have never had a say in how they are governed and they have none now. Nor is there any effective sanction, if Peking rats on its guarantees, about Hong Kong's special brand of capitalism. The reason why we stand up to the IRA but not to China is we can beat the former (or think we can), but not the latter.

So the morality of 'business as usual' is restricted to dealing with those opponents we consider smaller than ourselves. Yet even there a little thought should demonstrate the weaknesses of such an approach. Politics does not — at least, it should not — take place in a vacuum. It is normally prudent to take all circumstances into account; if the circumstances change it is sensible to consider these changes. It is, one would have thought, an obvious point; in the coal dispute, for example, each side's tactics reflect calculations about whether enough power stations will be supplied with enough coal to see Britain through the winter without power cuts. If either side finds that its predictions are wrong, it will have to amend its tactics accordingly.

To say 'business as usual' after the Brighton bomb is to say one of two things: either that circumstances in the war with the IRA have not changed; or that they have changed, but the government proposes to ignore the fact. The first proposition is plainly nonsense, while the second is frightening.

IT IS IMPORTANT to be clear where this argument leads — and where it does not lead. It leads principally to the suggestion that the government has both an obligation and an opportunity, to reassess its politics towards Ulster.

The obligation arises from the fact of the bomb: circumstances *have* changed. At the very minimum Douglas Hurd, the new Northern Ireland Secretary, has to reassess his tactics if he is to have any greater success than his predecessors in achieving one of his main goals: depriving the IRA of support among Ulster's Catholics.

The opportunity concerns the nature of British rather than Irish politics. This summer's MORI polls for Mary Holland's LWT series, *From the shadow of the gun*, confirms what every poll for a decade has shown: that most British people care little about Northern Ireland; that, when asked, they would prefer to break our links with the province; but believe the withdrawal of British troops would lead to greater violence. In short, we don't like what happens in Ulster and prefer not to think about it.

That attitude creates special political problems for any British government. Almost any initiative it takes — whether promoting Irish unity, or integrating Ulster with Britain, or trying something in between — threatens to disturb public apathy. But if that apathy is already disturbed, as it has been at Brighton, then the political options change. As a general rule, the best time to do anything new and risky is when the other side has done something terrible: *they* can then be blamed for whatever goes wrong. The IRA has given Hurd a freedom of manoeuvre, in terms of domestic British politics, that he is unlikely ever to have again.

Those arguments for not doing 'business as usual' in the wake of the Brighton bomb relate, in different ways, to the substance of British policy. A wholly separate argument relates to the *procedures* by which political decisions are reached. To the extent that the Conservative Party conference met on time on Friday morning, and the Prime Minister delivered her speech on Friday afternoon, 'business as usual' was a proper response, as both Neil Kinnock and David Owen promptly recognised.

The line to be drawn between the procedures and the substance of policy making is a vital one. I happen to think (although it is not the purpose of this column to argue the case) that British policy towards Ulster is fundamentally wrong, in both its uncertain ends and its draconian means. But Mrs Thatcher's is the elected government; to argue that last week's bomb should provoke a change in policies is very different from permitting it to change the government.

With a Conservative majority in the Commons of 142 and only one MP dead, the prospects of the government falling are obviously fanciful. Even if the Liberals win the Southgate by-election, one third of Tory MPs could stay away permanently from Parliament and the Conservatives would still be able to win every division.

But suppose the bomb had been detonated at Labour's 1975 conference; and suppose 20 MPs had been killed. The immediate impact would have been to deprive Labour of its Commons majority; and had the Conservatives won enough of the by-elections that followed (and they won a number of normally safe Labour seats in that Parliament), not even the Lib-Lab pact could have provided Labour with enough strength in the Commons to continue governing. An early general election would have become inevitable; a likely, even if unintended, result of such a bomb would have been a change of government at Westminster.

Although Sir Anthony Berry is the third MP to have been killed by the IRA in recent years, his is the first death to raise this issue. Neither Airey Neave nor Robert Bradford belonged to the governing party when they were killed; in any case a general election had already been called at the time of Neave's death. Nor is there any parallel when MPs die 'normally' and cause by-elections that may affect the balance of forces in the Commons: Sir Anthony Berry was a direct victim of a violent attack by the government's enemies.

There is one simple way to prevent last week's bomb from distorting the political process. That would be for the main parties to agree not to contest any by-election that is caused by terrorism. If Labour and the Alliance were to give the Conservatives a free run in Southgate — that would be a more practical way for us to prevent the IRA from distorting the political system, than buying the rest of the cant about 'business as usual'. □

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ARMIES OF THE RIGHT

Mrs Thatcher's junior parliamentary officers, a cadre of impatient young men, are overwhelmingly from the Hard Right. Andrew Roth charts their promotion and war against the wets

IF MRS THATCHER *had* gone into her bathroom a few minutes later early last Friday morning, the first order of business for the Parliamentary session opening this coming week could have been the election of a new Tory Leader and Prime Minister. The front runner would have been the bomb-damaged Norman Tebbit. His strongest asset would have been the heavy preponderance of right-wingers among the new 1983 intake of Tory MPs.

The stand-in for the wounded Tory Chief Whip, John Wakeham, will have his hands full in the new session, not least because of the special problems caused by the muscle-flexing character of the two-thirds of right-wingers among the 101 new MPs who flooded into Tory ranks in June 1983. This was symbolized for me by a conversation I overheard last week at Brighton. Christopher Chope — a prominent member of the 'privatization Mafia' a product of St Andrews University and the Adam Smith Institute and ex-Leader of Wandsworth Council — was boasting to a friend of his new role as secretary of the Conservative MPs' Environment Committee.

This unnoticed transformation of thrusting, highly ideological new right-wing MPs into the junior officers of Mrs Thatcher's Parliamentary army poses serious problems for the Whips and the government — as Francis Pym once predicted. The new boys have taken over 34 posts as secretaries of Tory backbench committees — two-thirds of the total. They have also been appeased with 32 seats on key House of Commons Select Committees.

'The new Tories were so numerous and cohesive', said one senior ex-Heathman, 'that they easily defeated the divided Old Guard they disdained'. This disdain for the 'over-cautious' 'slow-moving' Old Guard was reflected, too, in Parliamentary motions sponsored and co-sponsored by new boys, who made no effort to attract the support of elder statesmen.

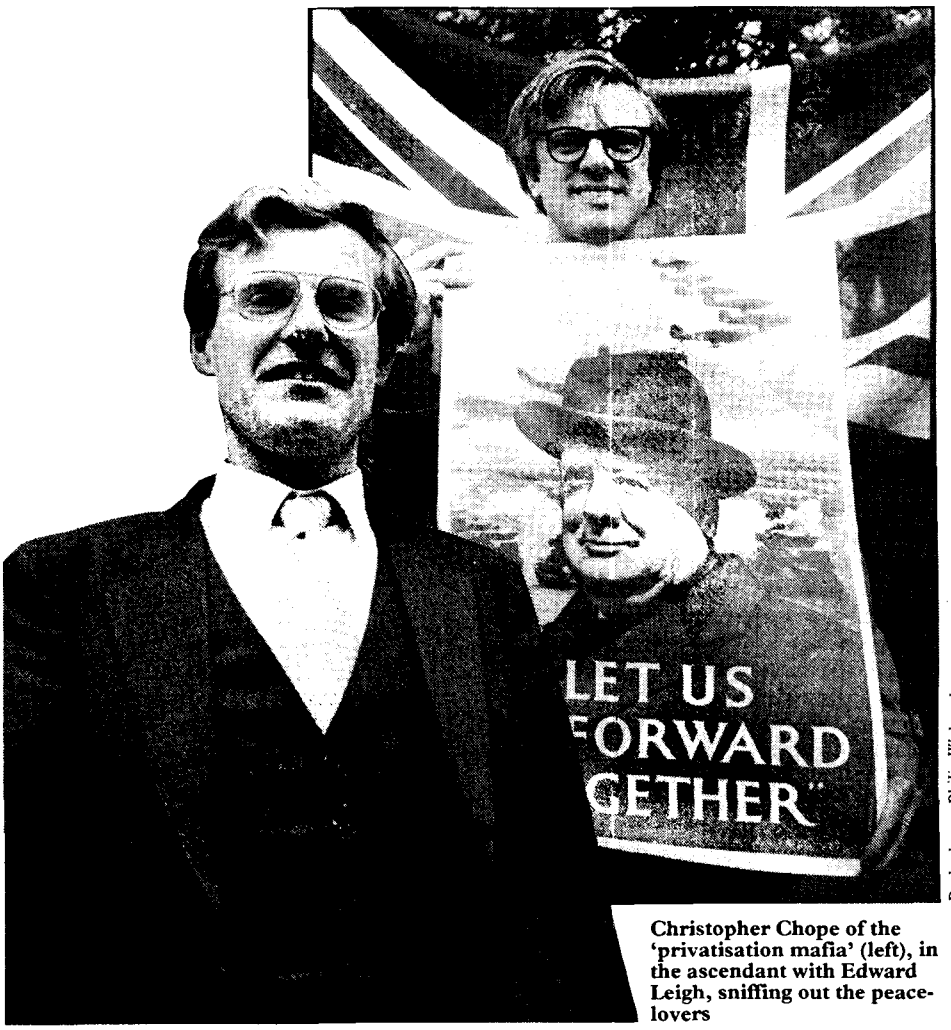
The elections for officers of Tory backbench committees, which are held again in November-December, have given a cloak of respectability to the new hard Right: to Gerald Howarth as secretary of the Tory MPs' Education Committee; to Neil Hamilton on Trade and Industry; to Michael Forsyth and Chris Chope as joint secretaries of their Environment Committee; to Michael Fallon as secretary of their Northern MPs' Group; to Peter Bruinvels as secretary of Urban Affairs; to Edward Leigh as secretary of both the Agriculture and Defence committees.

It would be a mistake, nevertheless to oversimplify these advances simply as a form of 'entryism' by people uniformly sympathetic to the misnamed, semi-fascist 'Tory Action' group — as suggested in the BBC *Panorama's* 'Maggie's Militant Tendency' programme, now subject to multiple libel actions. Although Neil Hamilton, as a student activist in the Monday Club, did visit the congress of the semi-fascist Italian party, MSI, in 1971, the current crusades of this former Institute of Directors man are as a hardliner on economic issues, including 'bashing the miners'.

Gerald Howarth's anti-immigration mother was briefly in the National Front and he himself was on the council of the Monday Club, but he is basically a hard right-wing libertarian — as much against fluoride in drinking water as against unions. More significant than whether any of these young right-wingers playfully goosestepped in Berlin in August 1983 was their role in April 1984 in trying to stop Employment Secretary Tom King's 'deal' with the TUC to retain the system that requires trade unionists to 'contract out' of the political levy to the Labour Party.

Not all the Tory newcomers are hardline right-wingers, though. About a third of the 101 new boys are 'mainstream' Tories. These include three scions of the old Tory Establishment: Churchill's grandson, Nicholas Soames; the nephew of a former Tory Chancellor, David Heathcoat-Amory; and the grandson of the former UK Ambassador to France, Robert Harvey.

It is also a mistake to think that, because fewer new boys are from Oxbridge, they are mostly primitive backstreet immigrant-bashers, like Terry Dicks (whose victory at Hayes and Harlington convinced even the sitting MP, SDP defector Neville Sandelson, of the dangers of the Alliance splitting the non-Tory vote). In fact, the bulk of the new right-wing activists are middle-class professionals from redbrick universities (with a hard inner-core from St Andrews). Chris Chope, Michael Fallon, Michael Forsyth and Robert Jones are all products of St Andrews. Hamilton was a product of the University College of Wales at Aberystwyth and Edward Leigh of Durham University, where he was President of the Union.



Both photos: Philip Wolmuth

Christopher Chope of the 'privatisation mafia' (left), in the ascendant with Edward Leigh, sniffing out the peace-lovers

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Black bearded Robert Jones made his first big splash at the 1981 conference with the words: 'Margaret Thatcher has a vision that Britain will be great again one day. Ted Heath has a vision that Ted Heath will be great again one day'. But the new hard men of the Right are not in general gushing Thatcher idolators, although they came in on her back in 1983, with a bit of help from Alliance vote-splitting.

In fact, those personally closest to Mrs Thatcher are mainly not hardline right-wingers. She likes the burly charmer Jeremy Hanley, who kept the Liberal Alan Watson from finally winning his long battle to take Richmond. (She likes Hanley, though, not for his liberal views on immigrants or video nasties but because, he actually managed as a teacher to get Mark Thatcher through one accountancy examination.) Mrs Thatcher is also fond of the highly intelligent Richard Ryder, who was her political secretary for six years. But Ryder too is a centre Tory, who rebelled last December against the government's decision to preserve house conveyancing as a monopoly for solicitors.

THE NEW BOYS have called attention to themselves with their voting rebellions. This is partly because, with many holding precarious seats and without enough constructive jobs to go around them all there are limited ways of attracting political notice. (The Tory Whips have tried to ease this problem by putting many more new boys on select committees than normal.)

What characterizes the most active and dedicated of the new hardliners is their ability to form groups and launch initiatives in any field in which they see an opportunity to pull the Conservative Party further to the right, or to prevent it from moving toward the consensus centre, or to have a bash at Labour, the unions and the Alliance. They proliferate motions and make short sharp raids in Parliament, much like hard left groups do at Labour's annual conferences.

Edward Leigh, for example, who made his pre-Parliamentary reputation playing dirty tricks against CND chief Monsignor Bruce Kent during the latter's 1982 US tour, has stepped up his CND-bashing since being elected for Gainsborough last year. This year he has worked to outlaw 'peace studies'; attacked CND as 'Lenin's dupes' who are 'doing the Soviet's dirty work for them', and cheered on the siting of cruise missiles in the Netherlands as well as here. (He has a sideline in forcing postal ballots on unions.) Hardliner Neil Hamilton, the grandson of a miner, has spearheaded an effort to speed nuclear power construction so as to reduce the clout of the NUM.

The right-wing new boys run a whole series of overlapping and interacting crusades. Their flags are monetarism (especially if they heard of economics at St Andrews) and privatisation (especially of local government services). They love privatizing local government services partly because some of them made their names in this field.

Some of them actually have a stake in the field. Pritchard Services Group, the cleaning contractors, are a client of Michael Forsyth's PR firm, though Chris Chope eventually refused an offer to be a consultant to Grand Metropolitan, who won Wandsworth's street cleaning contract.

In November and December we shall see in the Tory backbench committee ballots how much further the right-wing new boys can push their influence in the war against 'dangerous wets' like Michael Heseltine and Peter Walker. □

CONSERVATIVE PARTY: THE REBELS

CRYING AT MY PARTY

George Tremlett has been the Conservative GLC Councillor for Twickenham since 1973. Last month he was expelled from the GLC Conservative Group for advising electors to vote for Ken Livingstone. This is his personal reaction to Brighton

LAST FRIDAY'S traumatic events at Brighton brought out all Margaret Thatcher's finest characteristics, and yet also exposed the flaws in her approach to government.

In some respects this was the Falklands all over again. Then, as on Friday, there was a sudden dramatic challenge to the authority of government. But what worried me then, as now, was the Prime Minister's failure to put the events of the moment in the context of history.

After the Falklands drama there was no magnanimity in the hour of victory; the Archbishop of Canterbury was rebuked for preaching reconciliation and, when the Queen refused to take part in an overblown ceremonial parade throughout the City, the Prime Minister took her place! Even worse, now that democracy has returned to Argentina, there has been little attempt to heal the wounds between our two nations.

After Friday's terrible events there was a similar reaction. Mrs Thatcher's initial response was noble and correct; few would not have been moved by her calm dignity in the hours that followed the explosion. But then came the Conference speech.

Now this was a great moment in British

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history. There had been an attempt to destroy an elected British government. It was instant history watched in the homes of the nation with the images especially sharp for me having just returned from addressing a large meeting in Brighton with Ken Livingstone as part of our campaign to save the GLC.

Throughout that week there had been intense criticism of the Prime Minister. Peter Walker, Norman Tebbit and Michael Heseltine had all staked out their bids for the succession. There was a deep feeling of unease throughout Conference because of the government's handling of unemployment. During my own speech at the Metropole I had noticed that despite some highly organised heckling (which we had been warned to expect some ten days earlier) a major part of the 600-strong audience had listened attentively and even applauded my severest criticisms of the government.

I had repeated my argument, which no leading Conservative has ever denied, that much of our present conflict within the State stems from the manner in which the Prime Minister led her Party into the last general election. She had wanted to demonstrate that, following her success in defeating Britain's enemies abroad (the Falklands), she would now take on Britain's enemies within — Ken Livingstone, Arthur Scargill and Tony Benn.

She would stop Ken Livingstone governing London.

She would stop Arthur Scargill dead in his tracks.

She would stop Tony Benn taking over the country.

All the other issues were ancillary to that central theme — the personal abuse of Michael Foot, the arguments over defence, the economy and the unions. These were just part of a highly successful campaign to suggest that the Labour Party was now in the hands of a militant mob who constituted a threat to democracy. The Prime Minister may have convinced herself that her message was correct, but the electors were not so sure; they deserted the Conservative Party in their tens of thousands, and we only ended up with a Conservative government because the Opposition vote was fragmented.

This, I have always suggested, was because people do understand that Britain cannot be governed through conflict; they do perceive that the government is dividing the nation; they do see through these false simplistic arguments about 'the enemy within' and 'the battle between good and evil'. One would have thought that by the end of her Brighton Conference Mrs Thatcher would have realised that even her own supporters are now starting to doubt these constant suggestions that Livingstone, Scargill, the unions, the Liverpool councillors are all part of some dangerous conspiracy to destroy the State.

There, in the immediate aftermath of that terrible bomb, with the Provisional IRA having already claimed responsibility, there was an opportunity which any natural statesman would have seized to address the nation and talk of the realities of One Nation (which really does mean something in British politics) and the need to strengthen and defend our system of government by healing the wounds within the State.

None of our great Prime Ministers would have missed a moment like this. Lloyd George, Churchill, Attlee or Macmillan would all have seized the opportunity to say that the Government would face the great issues of the day. Her own Party members were waiting for Mrs Thatcher to do just that. No one expects her to change course or eschew her beliefs, but the Party was waiting for her to recognise that much is wrong with Britain today with the real level of unemployment nearly 4,000,000, the £ halved against the dollar, poverty growing, homelessness increasing, suicides rising and a general feeling of helplessness in some parts of the country.

But she missed the opportunity.

Here we were, with that final Conference speech, back to the poisonous rhetoric of the 1983 general election campaign with the miners linked to the IRA by innuendo, and the audience told that:

> The nation now faces the most testing crisis of our time — the battle between the extremists and the rest . . . the government will not weaken. This nation will meet that challenge. Democracy will prevail.

And I *know*, because of all the pressures brought on me not to defend the GLC and not to share platforms with Ken Livingstone, that Mrs Thatcher's immediate colleagues in government and at Conservative Central Office really do see Livingstone and Scargill linked inextricably with the IRA; they do believe that there is an attempt to overthrow the State.

One can see how their case has developed. Livingstone was naive to attempt his one-man peace initiative in Northern Ireland. Scargill was foolish to ignore his own members' demands for a ballot, and plain silly to talk within the context of the present dispute of bringing down a recently elected government with a huge Parliamentary majority. But the test of statesmanship is to assess the significance of minor events, place them within the context of history and never overreact to any momentary problem. The government has consistently failed that test, and it is *this* failure that is the most testing crisis of our time.

There are great issues currently dividing the nation — unemployment, abolition of the GLC and Met Counties, rate-capping and the miners' dispute. In each case the government has failed to put events within the context of history. They just do not seem to understand that in each case the desire to oppose the government springs from a moral concern; it is this that is uniting the Labour movement as seldom before and I feel compelled to join what is fast becoming a moral crusade because I have lived in areas where there is now deep unemployment; I have spent my adult years trying to develop a system of government in London that would help the poor, the black and the unemployed; I have lived among miners; I have been down a mine, and no one can tell me the price of coal when members of my wife's family have been killed and crippled down the pits this century.

My whole adult life has been spent serving the Conservative Party in the belief that it did care; I grew up believing that men like Harold Macmillan and Iain Macleod had a vision of society that was clean, pure, decent and classless, and now after thirty years serving that cause I find myself horrified and deeply angered by the damage my party is doing to the very fabric of the nation. □

CONSERVATIVE PARTY: THE MEMBERS

MONSTERS FROM THE DEEP

Once upon a time the Tory party represented the simple class interest of the property owners. Now if embodies quite other interests. Sarah Benton talks to some 'ordinary' Conservatives at Brighton about what they had to fear

A WOMAN with an Afro hair-do runs her chipped nail varnish finger down the stocks and shares column of the *Financial Times*. Beside her at the foyer table, two women with Lancashire accents talk softly of their children. At the end of the table, three men in grey suits talk flatly of their lost clause until they are suddenly roused by a jubilant fourth: 'Heard the good news? Scargill's been done for one grand, the union for 200'. The men brighten.

It's just another quiet day at the Tory party conference, the vast television light-bright hall half empty while the court retinue of Representatives, Observers and assorted notables sits at the tables outside to drink and gossip. It's a rare thing to overhear them talking about politics.

Yet the shattering of this apparent calm last Friday morning seemed almost to have been expected. Press a placid Tory, who wants nothing more that a world in which there is no political argument, no interference with the natural way of doing things, no disturbing questions on war or economics or sex, and out comes a flow of nightmare fears and anecdotes. They live, precariously sheltered behind their mortgaged walls and Mrs T's overpowering presence, besieged on all sides by muggers, miners and marxists. In a discussion with four working-class Tories, on what their party stood for, the most succinct reply was: 'Keeping chaos at bay'.

If chaos hit the Tory party last Friday, it was no more than the confirmation of the fears which daily fuel their party allegiance. The last time they were in Brighton, the closest threat was from Black rioters. The racism ran very near the surface, breaking through in many conversations and resolutions on law and order, race and immigration. This year there were as many Black people at the Conservative conference as there were at Labour's and the debate managers selected a good few of them to speak.

Their place as the Enemy to Democracy has been usurped by the miners, described over and over again as fascists. Scargill did not believe in the ballot box but in violence. In a party where 'Democracy' 'Britain' 'the State' are mystical forms, so too are the antitheses, the marxists and miners etc.

Leftists venturing into the Tory Party usually expect to meet the mirror image of a left-wing

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party — committed, highly political, arguing over finer points of policy between book stalls groaning under the latest stack of books of political theory and economic facts.

But the mass of ordinary Conservatives appear profoundly apolitical. There is a network of CPCs, Conservative Political Centres, which are supposedly responsible for political education. According to Representatives from Greenwich this meant they were sent a questionnaire to fill in every so often so that the party centre could keep in touch with grassroots feeling. Which may be a good thing, but it's not education. It's not surprising that (ex-communist) Sir Alfred Sherman is more often to be found expounding his views on feudalism and Byzantine trade routes to hapless left-wing journalists than to fellow party members; nor that Sir Keith Joseph, another who values the intellect, has for so long looked mad.

Even the 'left-wing' Tory Reform Group has been intimidated out of its campaign for party democracy ('TRG — The Enemy Within' was a popular badge) and this year chose to swim with the tide. They organised a meeting on 'How to Defeat the Revolutionary Left' at which a Professor Paul Wilkinson gave a speech on how to spot a subversive that was wholly devoid of facts. Chairman Iain Picton then urged worried members to compile dossiers on teachers who were spreading subversion through peace studies. The TRG would, he assured them, take it to Sir Keith Joseph. That's no good, objected one who had tried, 'Sir Keith Joseph talks of local democracy.'

OF COURSE, those in Brighton were not wholly typical of the party. Because it is not a policy-making body there is no real debate and places are regarded as treats and rewards for the honorary office holders. Nonetheless, even for a southern assembly, there were almost as many working-class voices as at the Labour conference — and infinitely more women.

A party that represents, without demur, women's fears of rape and the unsafe outside; that exalts the archetypal protectors of women — the police force; and formally approves of the idea that trade union politics, military and economic facts are horribly boring, is a comforting party for many women. In this, they are not that different from many feminists. (Indeed, if Tories still use the model of the feminine representing irrationality, holding things together, and emotion, and the masculine the intellect and personal will to power, then the Tories would be a decidedly feminine force. For on the whole they were a passive lot, looking to leaders to do their politics for them.)

Many of the Tory women shared a feminist discontent, which often seemed to be about their dubious social status. The Chairman of Tunbridge Wells Conservatives did emanate a rare well-being; but she was an 'old fashioned Tory' still wealthy enough to employ domestic help and who minded (she said) having such a large house because it gave her less time 'to help others'. Less fortunate Conservative women have lost their social role as the employer of servants to the washing machine. Criticism from them — about the lack of concern for youth, the changed divorce laws, the threat to child benefit, the ravaging of the environment — spoke of a genuine anxiety.

'No political argument, no interference with the natural way of doing things, no disturbing questions on war or economics or sex. . .'

Philip Wolmuth

Questioned about their political ideas, or about the complete lack of democracy in their own party, most ordinary Tories were quite unruffled. These were not things they valued. Where they were highly sensitive was on morality. When a vicar made a banal speech on defence he was rapturously applauded, an overflow of gratitude that someone should flaunt his dog collar in the service of the Tory party, nuclear weapons and hating Russia. Earnest delegates insisted that their party was *the* caring party; they merely had an image problem. Hence Margaret Thatcher's speech in which she stressed her concern about unemployment. Yet hardly a delegate in conversation spontaneously spoke of the awful *experience* of the poverty and hopelessness that unemployment brings. It was the consequences of it they feared, another bogey of a revengeful mass and urban dereliction rising up to disturb their freedom to exploit.

TAKE, AS AN example of the politics of grassroots Conservatives, one working-class Tory, a councillor and ex-Mayor from Essex. Why was he a Conservative? Because of the threat from the marxists. Who were they and what did they do? He was stumped for a specific answer, but insisted they would overthrow democracy. Oh yes, Ken Livingstone was a marxist. Why had Londoners voted for him? Because Londoners were all fools and had always voted Labour. Marxists, however, were dangerous because, now the corpse of the Labour Party was riddled with them, they would take over the SDP and Liberal Party. No one would vote for them publicly because British people weren't fools. Yes, he would describe his party and himself personally as Christian, although he was in fact an agnostic having been brought up by Jesuits. But would Sikhs and Jews be welcome in his Christian party? Oh yes; he was certainly not a racist. But he would personally like to kill Paul Boateng, the Black chairman of the GLC police committee, because he criticised the police force.

If other delegates were less contradictory, most offered as their reason for being Conservatives a reaction to the threat from the Left, one that was rarely defined and always coupled with an equally undefined evocation of leadership, country, freedom. Most had an anecdote of their moment of choice: 'the day I saw Bessy Braddock', a foul-mouthed women whom no one could respect; 'the 1964 election when Wilson ran down everything Britain stood for'.

In a national party which insists material factors do not determine political allegiance, individuals must pinpoint a moment of choice. And it was quite clear why it involved a vituperative rejection of the Labour Party. In the first place, Labour demands a level of political commitment that few people are prepared to make. In that sense, it is a party of the elite, not of 'ordinary' people. Most of these 'ordinary' working-class delegates came from Labour families — and had escaped; from community memories of poverty and bad housing, from a politics that confirmed their class status as inferior and oppressed. Their hatred of that trap was ferocious.

In the Conservative party, no one talked of class. Anyone could join the court of the great and the good, mingle with them on equal terms; feel, instead of the prison of class inferiority and disagreeable conscience, that they were part of the embodiment of a mystical national good. Such a belief can only derive coherence from the conjuring up of the Alien, a force whose shape you never quite see but which lurks in every unlit space ready to destroy you; and is incubated, unnoticed, in the healthy body politic. □

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IRELAND BLASTS BACK

The unpalatable truth is that violence gets attention. Mary Holland reports

THE MOST IMMEDIATE lesson of last Friday's IRA attack at the Grand Hotel in Brighton is one with which, over the years, Irish politicians have become brutally familiar. One audaciously placed bomb can do more to concentrate the minds of British politicians on Northern Ireland than endless hours of patient discussion and diplomacy.

For several months now (some would say for years) the Dublin government has been trying to engage Mrs Thatcher's interest in the possibilities of much closer Anglo-Irish co-operation in dealing with the problems of the North. For most of last week, before Friday's bomb, diplomats from the Irish Embassy in London had been busy in Brighton. Their task was to canvass Conservative MPs and ministers in the hope of mustering support for some positive political response to the 'new realism' in the Republic, which has been evident since the publication of the Forum report.

It was already depressingly clear, not only from the mood at the Tory Conference but with Labour in Blackpool the week before, that the miners' strike had taken over British politics to an extent that displaced most other issues. One after the other, Conservative MPs, of the select band which interests itself in Northern Ireland, told me that it was now very difficult to believe that the Prime Minister would devote her mind and energy to pursuing a risky new initiative in Northern Ireland while the MacGregor-Scargill drama continued centre stage.

Whatever the IRA's own political objective in attempting to kill Mrs Thatcher and her Cabinet, their bomb certainly swept away that mood of jaded indifference to the Irish problem. The effrontery of the attack, the fact that it came so close to success has focused attention on Northern Ireland in a way that I certainly cannot remember in recent years. If anything, that interest seems to have grown rather than diminished over the past week as the general public has come to realise the full extent of the security problem which it could be facing. If, as police reports seem to indicate, the IRA's techniques are now sufficiently sophisticated for its volunteers to be able to place undetectable bombs, designed to kill public figures, days, weeks, even months in advance the possibilities are almost too horrific to contemplate. Police all over the country must now be asking themselves who might be at risk in their areas and how far they should go to protect them.

There has been endless speculation as to why the IRA did it. The simplest and not entirely flippant answer is: because they found they were able to. Besides, the idea of wiping out the British government, or a good part of it, is one of the oldest dreams in the Irish Republican canon. Cathal Brugha, one of the IRA's most

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respected leaders in the War of Independence and Minister of Defence in the first Dail, tried several times to mount such an operation. His plan, which he travelled to London to reconnoitre, was to shoot the whole government front bench from the visitors' gallery of the House of Commons.

Any active service unit operating in Britain must have as a high priority the assassination of figures prominent in public life, up to and including the Queen. These would include judges, politicians, senior members of the defence forces, almost everybody, in fact, who could be described later as part of the British war machine.

They would not now be encouraged to put the lives of innocent civilians at risk. The Harrods bomb at Christmas was judged to have been an extremely serious error and the IRA's statement that it had not been authorised was an almost unique public reproach to its own volunteers. At the moment, I understand, such a unit would be unlikely to go for members of the Labour Party. Partly this is because Labour is not in power, but also the Provisionals are keen to build support among the Left of the party. Recent issues of their newspaper, *An Phoblacht* have put considerable emphasis on Tony Benn's calls for British withdrawal from Northern Ireland.

The Provisionals' own comments on the immediate purpose of the Brighton bomb have been chilling. Even allowing for their desire to wring the maximum propaganda benefit from the incident, there seems little reason to disbelieve them. Danny Morrison has said that the IRA hoped to kill the entire cabinet. Gerry Adams has elaborated on this by saying that, if the attack had been successful, it would probably have led to the introduction of draconian security measures in the North which would have brought the whole issue to a head with considerable speed. Past experience has taught that the introduction of such measures greatly increases support for the IRA.

BUT THESE COMMENTS don't tell the whole story, nor probably even the half of it. Traditionally, operations mounted in Britain have had two objectives. One is the long-term task of sickening British public opinion so that pressure will mount for withdrawal from Ireland. But just as important as the impact that a bombing campaign might have in Britain are the effects on morale in Ireland itself and, crucially, on support in the United States. Earlier this month (*NS* 5 October) I wrote that the IRA's campaign would escalate — and suggested that this would be partly as a result of tensions within the Provos arising from Sinn Fein's espousal of electoral politics. Over the past few weeks Sinn Fein leaders like Gerry Adams and Danny Morrison have been absolutely explicit that they consider the continuation of a campaign of violence necessary in order to achieve the Provos' aim of British withdrawal from Northern Ireland.

What has surfaced increasingly over the past few months is the growing disenchantment within the IRA's own ranks with the amount of time and talent that has been invested in constitutional politics. The attempt to build a broad political base in the Catholic community extending beyond their own hard-core supporters has imposed considerable strains. Contrary to what some commentators have suggested, many Catholics vote for Sinn Fein in spite, and not because, of the IRA's campaign.

These Catholics desperately want some political progress which will bring peace for their families and have gauged, accurately, that the British government is most likely to be spurred into reconsidering its Northern policy by a large vote for Sinn Fein. But, as Danny Morrison has admitted, the atrocities committed by the IRA do bother Catholic voters and may cause them to withdraw their support. In order to broaden Sinn Fein's political base, the IRA has acceded to pressure to scale down its activities. The resulting drop in the statistics of violence has enabled the British to claim that the security situation is under control, a boast which has caused particular chagrin to IRA prisoners in jail.

Sinn Fein's commitment to the electoral process is also perceived as having had political effects very different from those intended by Adams and his young Turks when they first spoke of taking power with an armalite in one hand and a ballot paper in the other. Dissidents within the movement now argue, with some justification, that the main result of Sinn Fein's electoral successes has been to help the opponent they most want to defeat — John Hume's SDLP.

They argue that it is only since Sinn Fein started winning elections that the British government has conceded that there is a real problem of alienation in the Catholic community in Northern Ireland. Adams's own election in Westminster, displacing the House of Commons's favourite Irishman, Gerry Fitt, has been particularly effective in that regard. Critics in the IRA point to the setting up of the New Ireland Forum, the more conciliatory tone being adopted by the Unionist parties in Belfast and to closer relations between the London and Dublin governments. All these, they say, spring from the common desire to stave off the threat of Sinn Fein. This week, in the wake of the Brighton bomb, Adams has been particularly scathing about the Dublin government's insistent claim that it be given some role, as of right, to represent the interests of the Catholic minority in the North; a claim which Jim Prior at least recognised as not unreasonable.

In the immediate aftermath of the bomb, Conservative politicians were insistent that the government would not be deflected by the activities of the IRA from seeking political progress in Northern Ireland; and that this would include much closer co-operation with Dublin. Two of them, Chris Patten, a Junior Minister at the Northern Ireland Office, and Michael Mates were in Dublin last weekend to give added emphasis to this view.

But already that emphasis seems to be shifting. Increasingly one hears the view expressed that Mrs Thatcher will not be able to make any moves that would involve Dublin, because these would be interpreted as concessions made under pressure from the IRA. The Prime Minister, interviewed on Monday, was less than encouraging about her hopes for any future initiative.

If, as now seems possible, the government is going into a state of funk about the fragile consensus which it seemed to have reached with Dublin, then the bomb which blasted the Grand Hotel at Brighton will have succeeded beyond the IRA's wildest dreams. □

FOOD

THE GREAT UNFIT

Marion Bowman disputes the belief that healthy eating is just a matter of individual style

ONE OF the busiest places in Rusholme, Manchester, is the shop selling stale bread. It is an outlet for Gregg's, a city-wide bakery chain, and offers the day before's unsold bread, cakes and pies at half the normal price. If it wasn't bought by humans it would go for the pigs. An elderly woman buying doughnuts (12 for 20p) says: 'I eat this sort of thing all the time. You can't buy much meat on a pension.'

It has taken the communal kitchens and food convoys of the miners' strike to make many of us think about how others manage to eat when there is next to no money coming into the house. When getting enough to eat becomes a struggle for the labour aristocracy of the mining communities, it evokes an emotive history: the campaigns against adulteration of food in the 19th century, against starvation in the 1930s and, not least, the long fight for the welfare state.

Yet all the time there are people on low incomes for whom buying food is a never-ending stress. Unpublished DHSS figures revealed there were 7.7 million people on or below the 'poverty line' in 1981 and unemployment has soared since. Not that a job brings ease of living. One skilled worker who qualified for benefits of £90 a week recently took a job as a train cleaner — for £72 a week. According to government economics, this is just what the nation's economic health demands. But what does it do to the actual health of the poor?

The general belief, supported by the rarity of deficiency diseases like rickets and compounded by images of EEC grain mountains and milk lakes, is that Britain is a well-fed nation. This underpinned a key piece of Thatcher legislation on food 'de-regulation', the 1980 Education Act, which abolished not only the statutory obligation to provide school meals, but also nutritional standards for those meals. Together with the trend towards cafeteria-style school catering, most teenagers probably survive on a lunch of coke and chips. As one parent put it, 'The only thing school dinners do for kids now is teach them how to order a burger at a fast food chain.'

The government could intervene, as it has in the past — to make men fit to fight wars, or to free women from domestic labour to work in industry. Ensuring everyone gets a minimal, healthy diet could be a priority for Norman Fowler in his welfare reviews. It is safe to assume that it will not be.

FOOD HAS always been a highly sensitive subject for governments. In 1936, when malnutrition was widespread, John Boyd Orr exposed the relationship between class and diet in *Food Health and Income*. The book was a political sensation when it was published by

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Macmillan. But in fact it had begun as a government sponsored report — and the government refused to publish it.

Boyd Orr's successor as Director of the Rowett Research Institute, Aberdeen, is Professor Philip James, chairman of the group that produced the controversial recent report on the national diet. His group, the National Advistory Committee on Nutrition Education, was composed of leading academics, health professionals, the DHSS and the British Nutrition Foundation which is financed by the food industry. Despite careful manoeuvring to reach a consensus, including redrafting the final report, the DHSS and the Foundation began backpeddling. After much delay, it was finally published by the Health Education Council. Its implications were highly sensitive.

Its proposals for a 15-year programme of change in the optimum composition of the national diet are now probably well known to middle-class readers: reductions in overall fat, saturated animal fat, sugar, alcohol and an increase in fibre found chiefly in cereal-based foods. Its radicalism lies not in its research (which is essentially a resumé of reports from sources like the Royal College of Physicians and the DHSS itself), but in its redefinition of malnutrition in the UK: less a deficiency of nutrients like vitamins and protein but an excess of high-energy refined foods.

Since then there has been wide debate on diet-related diseases — coronary heart disease, diabetes, obesity and bowel cancer, the so-called diseases of affluence. We who read the papers of the affluent have been treated to endless exhortations to modify our diet, another lifestyle choice for the fitness-conscious middle class. There is implicit in many of the exhortations an equation between physical and moral fitness. If the great unfit are the poor, we can feel smugly reassured this is due to their feckless refusal to swap chips and television for haricot beans and jogging.

SUCH COMPLACENCY is ill-based, especially when the health educators in fact have little reliable information on what, and how, the poor do eat. The main official source of information is the government's annual National Food Survey. Dr Tim Lang, Director of Manchester Polytechnic's new Food Policy Unit, says that, as a major policy instrument, it leaves a lot to be desired. Designed in 1940, it is concerned only with food consumed at home. Yet about a tenth of all food is eaten in canteens, restaurants and fast food takeaways. It relies on representatives of official social class categories returning the information. Yet while the overall response rate is 50 per cent, the 'lower' the social category, the fewer respondents there are, overweighting the information in favour of the diets of the better of. Moreover, it does not distinguish between what different members of the family eat — yet there is growing evidence that in low-income households, the male head of household, or the children, get the 'privileged' diet.

Some of this evidence is emerging from a project being run by Manchester Polytechnic, whose findings will be published soon. It has been conducting a food survey of 1,500 people in four groups — the elderly, 16-20 year olds, the unemployed and people on social security — drawn from northwestern towns. The questionnaires are detailed, and already it is clear that for those on benefit the money is inadequate. In answer to the question 'What is the worst day of the week for buying food and why?', there are many replies along the lines of 'the last day or two before the Giro comes, because I have no money left'.

For married women, many said the hardest days were the last few 'before he gives me the housekeeping.' Several of them said, in reply to the question 'In your household who would you say gets the best food?', 'My husband' or 'the children'. One woman has no main meal herself 'because the children get school dinners'.

Unless you dedicate yourself to a life of searching out the cheapest fresh food, preparing and cooking it, it is a myth that a healthy nutritious diet is cheaper than, say, white bread, chips and doughnuts. Increasingly a wide variety of cheaper nutritious foods are now concentrated in hypermarkets, accessible only to the car owner. Many 'healthy' recipes can demand kitchen equipment or long cooking times which puts the cost out of reach. And 'healthy food' seems infinitely less comforting or less of a treat than a newly advertised burger.

Dr Lang commented that lack of knowledge

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JIMMY REID
on Arthur Scargill:
"I'm convinced, and this is based on knowing him for more than 25 years, that Arthur actually considers himself to be Britain's Lenin . . . Underlying the whole approach of Scargillism is a contempt for working people who are seen as pawns to be used by an "elite" as they plan and scheme revolutionary change.
This aim justifies the means. It doesn't really matter to them if you devalue the vocabulary of trade unionism. A picket is made to assume mystical significance. "You cannot cross a picket line" is proclaimed in absolute terms . . . In January 1983, the staff at the old NUM headquarters in London went on strike and Arthur Scargill continued working while his employees picketed outside."

TIMOTHY GARTON ASH
on East Berlin:
"The city centre was pullulating with uniformed and plain-clothes police. When I visited old friends, four men in a dark green Lada waited in the street outside, conspicuously inconspicuous. Well, it's one way for the state to keep full employment."

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did not appear to be a significant cause of poor diet, and the answers revealed a lot of interest in nutrition. Yet certain foods recur time and time again — burgers, chips, white bread. Post-war beliefs about a good meal, especially for those who carry a class memory of malnutrition, have a deep root. A 22-year-old unemployed printer in Stockport is concerned about fat content and additives in food but he eats a lot of white bread, crisps, bacon sandwiches, sausages and burgers. To the question 'Do you have a main meal every day?' he answers 'No, can't afford to'. He defines a main meal as 'meat, veg., potatoes, gravy, sweet.'

THE FINAL SECTION of the survey is a day's food diary. Among women and pensioners in particular, it provides evidence of a very spartan diet. One woman had 10 cups of tea (milk, two sugars) throughout the morning, a pie and four teas in the afternoon, an evening meal of chips, peas, sausage and tea, followed by two lagers and two more cups of tea.

The DHSS no longer provides extra cash benefit for weight-reducing diets (acknowledged to be more costly). Ironically, community dieticians continue to hand out artificial food substitutes sold to the NHS by drug companies. Several new brands of 'liquid nutrition' have recently come on the market. 'It all seems a very roundabout way to give people enough nutrients when they can't buy enough food to keep themselves well', says Hazel Andrews, a dietician in Rusholme.

Dr Lang hopes that when their survey is published its information will have significant influence on all concerned with diet, health and those on low incomes. 'The data is sorely lacking yet sorely needed' he said. 'In the last European elections the Labour party returned to its old theme of cheap food. In my view, access, quality and cost relative to income are just as important. "Cheap food" is just a superficial slogan which the Chartists dismissed in the 1840s.' □

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POLITICAL ASYLUM

HARDLY A SAFE SANCTUARY

Amrit Wilson examines Britain's biased treatment of political refugees

'THREE DAYS after I had applied for asylum, two policeman from the Aliens Registration Office came to see me. They told me my petition had been refused and I was to be deported. I was taken in a car to a British Airways plane by what looked like a back road to the airport. I was shouting out that I didn't want to go and in the end the pilot refused to take off with me on board. Then I was taken to the Aliens Registration Office in Holborn and locked up for three days. All my belongings were confiscated. Then I was moved to Pentonville prison.'

This young Tamil from Sri Lanka, fearful for his safety at home in a Commonwealth country, had looked for protection to Britain. He was eventually forceably sent back, after the first attempt to put him on a plane. This time, said the man, there were five of them. He says he was handcuffed and driven to the airport where about 15 ordinary uniformed policemen were waiting.

'I was forced to board a British Airways plane. I made the journey to Colombo in a state of shock. My handcuffs were kept on and two "Aliens police" sat one on each side of me.' At Colombo he was handed over to the Sri Lankan CID. Inspector Slater of the Aliens Registration Office says this was a routine discipline escort. It is a routine — including the liaison with the Sri Lankan police — which is rather different from the 'outstanding concern' for refugees recently expressed by Home Office Minister David Waddington.

HOW DO you prove that you have a well-defined fear of being persecuted or killed? According to Mr Maharasingham who has worked with Tamil refugees for some years: 'We have to provide evidence of the family being affected or the village destroyed. It is very difficult. Sometimes it is impossible. Currently there is a moratorium on deportations of Sri Lankans but really it is a farce because each case has to be dealt with individually.' For Ugandans the escape route is even more blocked. Because many Ugandans flee via Kenya, British authorities often ask them to return there and seek asylum, despite substantial evidence of co-operation between the Ugandan and Kenyan secret police.

It has been very different for East German refugees. 'Within a few weeks of martial law being declared in Poland', says Pal Luthra, who until recently worked for the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, 'the Home Office announced a blanket policy giving exceptional leave to all Polish refugees. They did not have to prove anything.' The different treatment points inescapably to the obvious: there are no objective criteria for granting asylum; policy is determined by political and racist criteria.

The political motive can outweigh narrow racism or (as in the case of Sri Lankan refugees) Britain's close relationship with a Third World dictatorship. In recent years by far the largest number of 'programme' refugees who were brought into this country as a result of a government decision were 17,000 Vietnamese (though there were also 3,000 Chileans brought in by the Labour government of the mid-'70s). The Vietnamese — though non-European — were considered outstandingly 'deserving' because of heavy international pressure to rescue fugitives from a communist country.

However, if you come from a non-communist repressive regime, even being white is not always enough. Jonathan Bloch, a white South African, was granted refugee status and exceptional leave to remain in 1978. Six years later, permanent status is still being withheld. The reason is given in a Home Office letter to Bloch's solicitors: 'Mr Bloch is co-author of a book entitled *British Intelligence and Covert Action*, which inter alia names individuals allegedly working for the British Intelligence authorities. Such an action in the view of the Secretary of State is bound to place servants of the Crown at greater harm or risk'.

Bloch's book described the link between the British state and the South African secret police, BOSS. He has the right to appeal, but the immigration rules do not specifically mention refugees as a category who can be granted indefinite leave to remain, so an appeal is bound to fail. He is now taking his case to judicial review. The final decision is likely to be crucial in determining the position of future political refugees, an issue that is due to be explored by a Home Affairs committee in the next parliament.

Last year the Home Office granted asylum to 1,018 of the 3,568 who applied. Like other signatory States, Britain theoretically applies the definition of a refugee drawn up by the UN Convention of 1951 and Protocol of 1967: someone who has a 'well-found fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion' if they stay in or return to their own country. In practice few refugees are welcome, unless they are well publicised victims of repression in Eastern Europe. Repression meted out by Third World dictatorships, whose citizens are not white, is not judged by the same criteria. And its victims who are not white are subject to the same hostility as ordinary black applicants for immigration.

For those escaping persecution in Commonwealth countries there is a peculiar problem. They are too British to be refugees from a foreign State and not British enough for free entry. In 1956 International Law brought them under the Convention, but Britain refused to consider them legally eligible for refugee status until 1980 and even now there is little evidence of any chance in practice. Providing they can *prove* that they are refugees certain groups of Commonwealth citizens — Cypriots and Ugandans for example — are given 'exceptional leave to remain' for a limited period. Others like Sri Lankans may be given 'temporary admission' with no endorsement in their passport and no status at all in the U.K.

Being granted only 'exceptional leave' or

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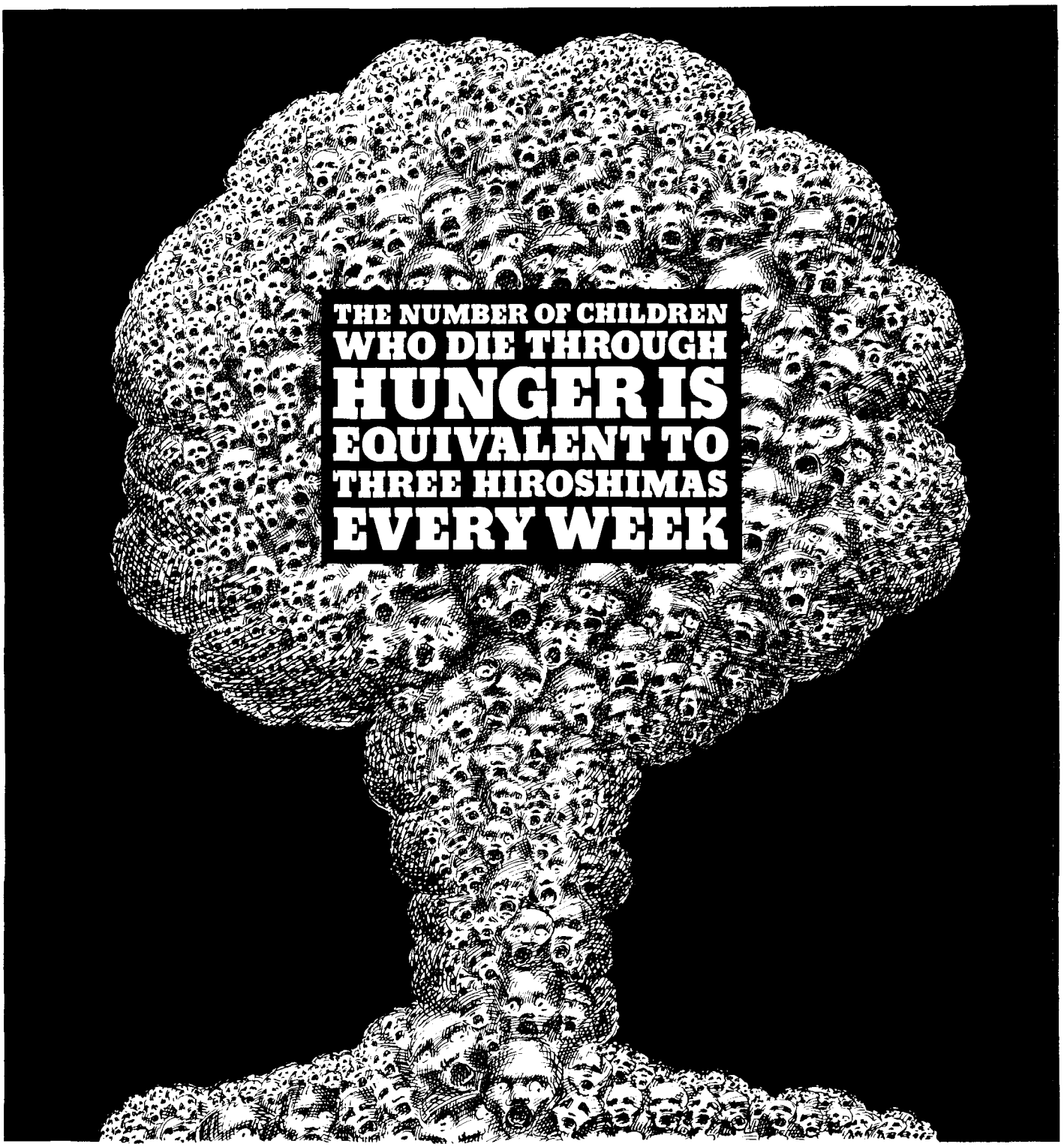

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'temporary admission' is bound to leave refugees feeling worried and insecure — and this is intensified by the fact that almost all welfare agencies dealing with refugees have close links with the Home Office. The effect has been to keep refugees perpetually trapped by fear and powerlessness and to stop them organising in any way to change their situation in Britain. Most refugees are sent to the British Refugee Council (BRC), which arranges their accommodation and provides social services while they are waiting for a Home Office decision. The BRC is a government-funded charity whose council members include other charities and church organisations but no black group.

Ronnie Moodley, a black refugee from South Africa who is now a housing worker with the Africa Refugee Housing Action Group ARHAG (one of the very few independent organisations run by refugees) explains that 'Refugees are afraid that details of their lives in London will be passed on to the governments of the countries they have fled from, and often this fear is justified because the state-funded bodies which look after our welfare are in a position to play a policing role . . . Refugees are also aware that these welfare organisations cannot really take on the Home Office on their behalf — for example residents at BRC hostels have seen others being deported while the BRC does nothing about it.'

However, in one respect the situation is changing — refugees have begun to make open criticisms of both government policy and their treatment by welfare organisations. And one immediate aim, according to Moodley, is the setting up of an independent forum for refugees. □

This England

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□May I suggest that the work being done by the police in controlling picketing during the current strikes should be recognised in some way? In the Services a General Service or special medal would be struck for 'Services in the cause of Law and Order'. Medals have a military flavour so perhaps a badge or flash would be more appropriate. It is certain that this struggle will be longer lasting than the Falklands campaigns and its outcome is of far greater importance to the future of this country. — Letter in *Daily Telegraph* (W. Pugh)

□Please couldn't we always have something pleasant or cheerful on the *Radio Times* cover? After all, it stays around the sitting-room for a week, and one doesn't want a week's reminder of ugly things. I've just had to paste over your 'Threads' cover with Terry Wogan for want of anything better. — Letter in *Radio Times* (Mrs Alice Rafferty)

□Residents of Scargill Road, West Hallam, have applied for a change in their address, so that newcomers know it commemorates the 16th c. rector John Scargill who built the first school in the village. 'Feelings are running very high. Some people appear to think this road is something to do with Arthur Scargill, and they do not like it,' said Mr Richard Heathcote, a parish councillor. — *Daily Telegraph* (R. Ebbatson)

Figures of speech

Mandy Merck

'THE WAY politicians communicate with the public has been shrouded in too much mystery for far too long' argues Max Atkinson in *Our Masters' Voices**. Atkinson's study provided the blueprint for the *World in Action* coaching sessions which launched working-class SDP delegate Ann Brennan into the Buxton limelight and current affairs coverage into another Autumn of Examined Oratory.

'Today,' intoned Vincent Hanna on *Newsnight's* report of the second day of the Labour Conference, 'Neil Kinnock had to make the political speech of his life. Above all, whatever the content, whatever the political weight, the tone had to be aggressive, the delivery secure.' *Newsnight's* edited highlights revealed the Atkinson rhetoric at work: three-part lists, contrasts, speaking over invited applause, the 'modest alliteration' we'd seen Mirror-man Joe Haines teach to Ann ('Bermondsey not Burgundy') Brennan:

> *Kinnock:* I condemn violence.
> I abominate violence.
> I damn violence,
> all violence.
> ALL VIOLENCE
> WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR.
> That's what I do.
> *Audience*: clap clap clap clap
> *Kinnock:* That's what makes me different from Margaret Thatcher.
> *Audience:* CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP
> *Kinnock*: I DON'T HAVE HER DOUBLE STANDARDS.
> *Audience*: CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

So how was it? In case the TV audience suspected they were only getting the goal mouth incidents, six MPs and Robert Maxwell were wheeled on to produce notices reminiscent of an out-of-town tour about to hit the West End:

> 'Beyond my wildest expectations!' (Betty Boothroyd)
> 'A brilliant conference performance!' (John Cunningham)
> 'Best speech I've heard — ever!' (Jeff Rooker)

Our fears that this charisma can be concocted owe a great deal to the pop sociology of the *Hidden Persuaders* variety, and through that, to the political distrust of the mass media fostered by marxist critics like Benjamin and Adorno. But it has its roots in the classical essays on oratory which provide the basis for Atkinson's analysis. The ancients, who had a few more tropes up their togas than Joe Haines or Thatcher scribe Sir Ronald Miller, agonised about what would happen if the skills they taught were placed in the wrong mouths. Atkinson's own source, the Roman Quintillian, warned that 'if oratorical ability is added to the armoury of evil nothing would be more dangerous', and this observation is only a late contribution to centuries of concern about the relation between eloquence and character, rhetoric and truth.

Quintillian's solution to this dilemma was ingenious:

> And if it is alike the saying of philosophers and the constant belief of the lay that no one is bad unless he is also stupid, well, there will hardly be an orator who is stupid.

Ronald Reagan's performance in the first presidential debate provided surprising confirmation of this point — surprising, because until then many people suspected that Reagan was bad, stupid and a rather good speaker. True, the *Guardian*'s Harold Jackson had reminded us beforehand that, impromptu, the President 'frequently mouths total gibberish', though 'his Hollywood training' was supposed to make 'it all sound wonderful'.

But if Reagan's showbiz skills failed to save him at the podium, Geraldine Ferraro's similar abilities seemed to be sinking her in the polls. Curiously, the very same voters who so notoriously elevated a B-movie actor to the highest office in the land seem to regard Ferraro's casting as sheer opportunism: 'It's like saying if we can get Elvis Presley for vice-president and he will get a lot of votes, let's put him on the ticket,' one disgruntled voter complained to the *Sunday Times*.

The prospect of a posthumous candidacy brings us to the events of late last week, which briefly threatened to overshadow the Prime Minister's closing address to her party conference. But no, her text — previewed by *Newsnight* with edited highlights of its nine predecessors, as well as John Tusa's range-finding instructions for desperate viewers ('Tomorrow's speech, the tenth, is now being written upstairs, in the Napoleon Suite at the Grand Hotel') — survived more or less intact. Trouper that she is, Margaret Thatcher, whose conference orations had previously been likened to the first night of *Evita* by one of her own former writers, emerged from the wings at 9.30 am and the show went on.

The result was 'the largest standing ovation of the conference', according to the *Observer* (*Newsnight* clocked it at 7¾ minutes). Afterwards, the notices were generous, on the premises that the extremity of the circumstances ('gone was her Reagan-style autocue') redeemed anything, even her bizarre antithesis in defence of the working miners: 'Scabs? They are lions!'

As for the IRA, someone should tip them off: Forget the bullet *and* the ballot. If you want the attention of our serious political commentators, try bombast. □

Mandy Merck is editor of Screen.

*Methuen, paperback £4.95

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DIARY

Anne Smith

Edinburgh

Was thoroughly bemused by the howls of indignation from all quarters re the Canadian press's adverse if accurate comments on the Queen's clothes. Every news programme had fashion pundits tying themselves in sweet little knots to demonstrate that her wardrobe, like everything else about the Queen's Majesty, is beyond reproach. Personally, I think the Queen has far too many coats and hats (unless, as seems entirely possible, she's having the same things dyed between engagements). One for through the week and one for Sundays and special occasions should be *quite* enough.

○

Am preparing to go to Venice to get two novels finished. If Cyril Connolly had lived in Scotland he would have put it at the top of his list of Enemies of Promise. It's just impossible to believe here that artistic activity is a respectable occupation for adults. So Iain Finlayson prised himself away from the sherry- and bridge-parties of his native Ayr, where the spirit of Burns hangs so heavy, to join me in a celebration of our freedom. He too is escaping; going to Rye to write a book on the writers who found the milieu there so stimulating — Henry James, E. F. Benson, Radclyffe Hall, to name but a few. We got drunk and swopped quotations. His is best, from Muriel Spark: 'It was Edinburgh that bred within me the conditions of exiledom; and what have I been doing since then but moving from exile into exile? It has ceased to be a fate, it becomes a calling' ('What Images Return' in *Memories of Modern Scotland*, ed. Karl Miller, 1970).

○

Arrived somewhat pie-eyed in the Princess Margaret Rose Hospital afterwards to see my sister, who has had a hip operation. Took a brace of hot pizzas for her and her fellow-sufferers, since this is the day the auxiliary staff strike against the privatisation of the cleaning services, and lunch is a cold collation. Private cleaners will only clean as far up as their arms will reach, I gather: no 'high' cleaning will be done. Odd for a hospital after all the salmonella horrors of recent weeks.

○

Went to Glasgow to hear a concert and shop among human beings (the dour snobbery of Edinburgh shop-assistants has to be endured to be believed). Am made to feel at home instantly I get into the street, as one drunk bellows good-humouredly to another a hundred yards away, 'Aye that's right ya cunt ye!' Could this be the same man who plays the role of token drunk Glaswegian in King's Cross Station, come north on one of British Rail's much-publicised weekend breaks? Even if so, he is still a better ad for us than Nicholas Fairbairn. I see a pair of the kind of slippers I've sought this many a year. Dispute with my companion follows. *He*: 'You must buy them now you've found them.' *Me*: 'But I'm going away.' *He*: 'You should take them with you.' *Me*: 'Don't be ridiculous! Did Gauguin pack carpet-slippers when he went to the South Seas?'

○

Got round to reading a copy of the *Sun* my sister pressed on me. Tight jeans, I learn from the showbiz page, 'often constrict nerve-endings causing a numbness in hips called meralgia paresthetics' (*sic*). 'One woman', it goes on, 'who had cold and numb hips was convinced she had a brain tumour until the pain was properly diagnosed.' So I composed a new slogan for Rupert Murdoch — *'Sun* readers have their brains in their backsides.'

○

Turn with joy back to the Brontës — anyway the deadline for my introduction to the new Everyman editions of *Agnes Grey* and *The Professor* is parlously close. I endeavour to psych myself up for a research session in the National Library, but fail as usual. Instead, ponder the fact that radical feminists haven't made nearly enough of Charlotte and Anne, both of whom exhibit a feminism and a Bolshevism that is profoundly satisfying to this reader. Contemplate submitting a Charlotte Brontë triangle to Judy Chicago's Dinner Party quilt; wonder if they'll take one done with felt and glue, since I never learned to sew (an achievement, not a failure, I can tell you — surely the welts on my hands where I was tawsed every week in the sewing class would even now show up in the right light). On the other hand, the Brontës were always sewing. Maybe I'll do Rebecca West instead.

○

Went to see one of my old lady friends who's just been burgled. Meant to take a tape-recorder to quiz her about her life and its lessons, but forgot. Am a bit President Fordish these days: if I'm carrying one thing I can't remember anything else, and I promised her *The White Hotel*. This is how my book on *grandes*, but obscure, old *dames* won't get written. She is housebound, except when a male friend comes to take her in his car to watch the sun setting over Edinburgh from Arthur's Seat. Today she is worried: 'Do women of my age have wet dreams? Last night I dreamed I was being lasciviously embraced by the god Jupiter. It was very frustrating when I woke up. I'm eighty-seven you know.' It was too late to take back *The White Hotel*, so I assured her that they probably do but are more discreet about it than she is. We had a mid-morning glass of brandy, which she swears she takes for her circulation, on the strength of it — 'Here's to indiscretion!'

○

Am informed that the guests at the Scottish Press Charities Lunch at the end of this month are to be Heseltine and Maxwell. Shall toss a coin for which demo to join when the time comes.

ROGER WODDIS

King's conscience

'We do not want to destroy the provisions and freedoms of the Employment Protection Act, but employers are put off by disenchantment with it.' — Employment Secretary Tom King.

The gaffers fall upon their knees
And pray their wishes will be granted:
'O guard us from our employees
And let us not be disenchanted.'

What flourish should announce Tom King?
A fanfare on a penny-whistle:
'My new job package in the spring
Will make for easier dismissal.'

For let the truth be understood:
Wage councils are the true destroyers.
They undermine the common good
And trouble sensitive employers.

Hamlet declared, 'The play's the thing',
And took elaborate precautions.
To catch the conscience of this King
Would take a net of vast proportions.

If workingmen had any sense,
The system would be less chaotic;
They'd work a week for fifty pence,
If they were truly patriotic.

Poor Tom's a-cold, but doesn't know
Just what a winter of dissent is.
Meanwhile, he points the way to go
With 'Forward — to the Hungry Twenties!'

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Camera Press

THE BLIGHTED TIMES OF WALTER MONDALE

'He couldn't outpoint Reagan, even if the President forgets the name of his own Vice-President, calls the B-1 a vitamin, or claims the Pope is President of Poland' — Claudia Wright on Walter Mondale (*NS* 21 September). Here she explains why

Washington

WALTER MONDALE has been saying all along that his main chance to win the election is to force the President to debate the real issues. For over a year the Presidential polls have shown that voter support for the President diminished if questions about foreign and domestic policy were posed first, putting the vote for President into a larger context before popping the Reagan-Mondale question.

The polls have also shown that when samples of the electorate were asked to say who was the better man at solving the country's real problems, Mondale was clearly ahead on controlling the nuclear arms race, keeping the US out of war, protecting the environment, managing the budget deficit, restraining defence spending, looking after the elderly, and ensuring that government programmes provide fair treatment.

Not bad for a man who until a week ago trailed the President by about 20 percentage points in the nation as a whole, and by varying margins in all but three of the 50 states. Yet despite a clear majority of the audience watching the 8 October debate deciding that Mondale had won the contest, articulated the real issues and improved his public image, the President lost less than five points of his electoral lead and none of his personal popularity. What's the explanation?

The conventional answer is that incumbent presidents are impossible to beat when the economy is growing. As the polls have suggested — and Mondale and Reagan jointly conceded during the first debate — most voters feel they are economically better off today than they were in 1980. Mondale has tried to neutralize the electoral consequences of this answer by throwing the shadow of a little class consciousness. 'If you're wealthy,' he said in his closing statement, 'you're better off. If you're middle income, you're about where you were, and if you're of modest income, you're worse off.'

He has also tried asking instead: 'Will you be better off?' in an attempt to catch some of the pessimism the polls have identified in Americans' attitudes towards their economic condition next year. He has tried to capitalise on the certainty acknowledged by three quarters of voters of a tax increase in 1985 by making Reagan look a liar on the issue. Finally, in the 21 October debate, he will try to confound the economic optimists with their own suspicion that the President's penchant for foreign military adventures might undo the domestic prosperity he is promising.

These are obvious, rational calculations about the electorate for the Democratic campaign to make. Reinforced by computer tabulations of polls, Reagan's visible vulnerability in debate has produced great relief in the Democratic party clubhouses and the major Washington news bureaux. What is true may finally be *seen* to be true — the President may not be able to conceal his mental incompetence after all. Even the *Wall Street Journal* conceded the point by intimating that Reagan should prove himself to the electorate by counting backwards from 100 by sevens. Among Democrats there is a sentiment of relief that, even if Mondale does lose, the President's victory won't be so sweeping as to make a mockery of all the rational calculations that have gone into the Democratic strategy.

THE DEBATE performances may well close much of the gap and redeem Mondale's reputation, as the party's supporters have been hoping. But they should not obscure four serious miscalculations the campaign has committed.

● The response of Black voters has been miscalculated -- turning out for Jackson was one thing, but turning out for Mondale has been quite another. Fearful of offending Jewish constituents who oppose Jackson's foreign and domestic policies, Mondale calculated that Jewish defections threatened him more than Black resentment at Jackson's defeat. But potential black voters have been put off by Mondale's attitude, and it's probably too late to enlist Jackson's help in winning them over. In a perverse twist, it was the Republicans who took Jackson's registration threat more seriously than Mondale. They set out to combat it by registering one-and-a-half white votes for every new Black vote Jackson had won. In this effort the Republicans have spent over $8 million — and have tagged the new registrants in their computer so that they can be found and brought to the polls with another $3 million in turnout money on election day. By comparison, the

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Democrats have spent only about $1 million — and lack the records to find their people when they need them.

● The gender gap has been less decisive than expected. Fewer women prefer the President than men, but overall Reagan still holds the majority of voters — both male and female. What the polls show is that the gap between young and old women and between white and Black women is almost as large as the gap between women and men. What the National Organisation of Women (NOW) and the promoters of Congresswoman Ferraro have largely failed to deliver for Mondale is the heterogeneous constituency they claimed to have organised when they pressed their drive for a woman on the ticket. It seems that Mondale could have taken for granted the loyalty of Democratic women without a woman on the ticket.

● The miscalculation of the youth vote has been one of Mondale's most dangerous blunders. The under-30 age group shows far stronger support for Reagan than any other generation — the effect is even greater when only those whites with college education are counted. Perhaps because he has college-educated, sympathetic children of his own, or because he recalls the youthful agitation against the Vietnam war, Mondale may have forgotten that before the Vietnam war the white American college student was a political reactionary. Once Mondale realised the mid-1980s student had no memory of the Vietnam war, he might have made an issue of registration for the draft, since he opposed it when President Carter decided to introduce it in 1980. He might also have mentioned Vietnam from time to time, to send a shiver down the soft spines of the college generation, but so far two debates have passed without a reference. There is nothing in the Mondale presentation that appeals to this generation — and much in his presentation of the economic facts of life that turns them off. But they might have switched had Hart been Mondale's vice presidential choice. For in Hart, young white males saw a tough, upwardly mobile figure with the advantage of comparative youth.

● And then there's the war issue. Ever since the Vietnamese launched their military offensive at the celebration of Tet in 1968, it has been clear to American politicians that the loss of American lives abroad costs the incumbent President millions of votes — that is, so long as the President has a choice of whether to bring the troops home or not. For Reagan the domestic risk of the Lebanon deployment was shared with Mondale and the majority of the Democrats at the outset. After the October 1983 bombing, the President did not allow them enough time to capitalize before he withdrew the marines altogether. Of all the Democratic candidates, Mondale has been the least able to take political advantage of the American casualties in Lebanon because he strongly endorsed US support for Israel's invasion and continued occupation of Lebanese territory from the beginning. Once the marines had been withdrawn, American voters could not discern which Presidential candidate was prepared to build higher truck barriers, deeper anti-tank ditches or showed greater readiness for revenge.

If there was one war issue remaining it was Central America, but by last month Mondale had lost his nerve for that. In an interview on 17 September, he proposed that 'we should try to quarantine Nicaragua if it uses force outside its borders', and added the threat of US bombing as well, claiming that an effort by Nicaragua to establish a base for MIG's to defend against air attack would be 'totally intolerable' and would have 'to be dealt with at that much higher level of threat'. This has left Ferraro with little room to manoeuvre, despite her differences with Mondale over Central America, so that when she debated with Vice-President Bush on 13 October, she uttered not a word of criticism of the Administration for undermining Mexico and the three other Contadora Treaty States in their successful effort to bring Nicaragua into the Contadora treaty. □

PERU

LOSING CONTROL

President Belaunde has just reshuffled his cabinet in preparation for next April's elections. He has promoted two anti-guerrilla experts to the posts of Prime Minister and Interior Minister. Colin Harding reports on the country's increasing violence

ON 21 JULY a young Peruvian trade union leader, Jesus Oropesa Chonta, travelled from Lima to his native province of Lucanas, in the remote Andean department of Ayacucho, for a meeting. Six days later he was detained by the police in the provincial capital, Puquio, and was never seen alive again. In mid-August his charred and horribly mutilated body was delivered to Puquio hospital by the police, who claimed to have found it on the bleak moors outside the town.

At 33, Oropesa was a prominent figure in both the National Agrarian Confederation (CNA), one of Peru's main peasant unions, and in the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR), which has representatives in both houses of Congress as part of the opposition coalition, United Left (IU).

The uproar created first by the PSR and CNA, and then by the Lima press, over his disappearance and death led to an internal police inquiry, the conclusions of which were flatly contradicted by the armed forces and finally by the Minister of the Interior himself. Seven policemen are now to stand trial (in the police's own courts) for murder.

Many aspects of the case remain obscure, but it has served to focus the attention of a complacent Peruvian public on some unsavoury aspects of the counter-insurgency campaign being conducted by the security forces against the Maoist guerrillas of the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) movement, which has its principal stronghold in Ayacucho. There is a growing clamour for an independent human rights body to prevent the 'dirty war' in Ayacucho from getting out of hand and perhaps putting Peru's fragile democracy at risk.

There seems little doubt that Oropesa was one of the growing number of victims of the counter-terror unleashed by the security forces in their increasingly desperate struggle against Sendero Luminoso. The guerrillas are proving to be a determined enemy who appear to be going from strength to strength in the Indian highlands, despite the presence of more than 4,000 troops for the past two and a half years.

Press investigations in Lima have suggested that Oropesa was picked up by the Puquio police because he had been accused of 'terrorism' (that is, membership of SL) by political enemies in his home village of Utec. His main opponents were members of the Puza family, wealthy shopkeepers and landowners and strong supporters of the conservative ruling party, Popular Action. In 1979 Oropesa was elected president of the community of Utec against the opposition of the Puzas. Four years later he was elected Mayor of San Juan de Lucanas (which includes Utec) on the PSR ticket, with more than 90 per cent of the votes. The Puzas took legal action to prevent him taking office.

When the local priest, another Puza, was asked why he regarded Oropesa as a terrorist, he replied simply: 'He used to come and stir up the people'. The anti-terrorist division of the Peruvian CID had no files on Oropesa, and his political activities were all perfectly legal under Peru's enlightened constitution. But there is growing evidence that a mere accusation of 'terrorism' is sufficient to sign the death warrant of left-wing activists in the paranoid atmosphere of those areas of Peru where the anti-guerrilla struggle is at its most bitter.

The Oropesa case is not an isolated one. Many other peasant and mining union leaders in Lucanas say they fear for their lives because they have been accused of terrorism, and PSR Senator Enrique Bernales said recently that 83 IU members had been arrested on similar charges.

The details of the Oropesa case that have so far come to light reveal an alarming tale of brutality, lies and cover-ups by the national police, the Civil Guard, who until recently have borne the brunt of the fighting against Sendero Luminoso.

The Puquio police at first denied that Oropesa had ever been arrested, even though there were several witnesses. They later changed their story and claimed the following: the army had ordered Oropesa to be taken under police escort to the nearby barracks at Andamarca. When they arrived the army officer in command refused to accept the prisoner, and sent the whole party back to Puquio. On the road Oropesa asked for permission to relieve himself. As soon as he was released from his handcuffs he took the opportunity to make a dash for it.

The police opened fire, but decided to retreat when between 25 and 50 'subversive delinquents' put in an appearance. They later changed their story again, and claimed that two policemen had lobbed a few phosphorus grenades after the fleeing Oropesa. The charred state of his body meant that they must have hit

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him. But the autopsy showed that Oropesa had been beaten about the head and stabbed in the neck before being burnt.

A Civil Guard report, presented to the Senate by Interior Minister Luis Percovich, who has now become Prime Minister, claimed that the Andamarca garrison commander had ordered the police escort to eliminate Oropesa on the road back to Puquio. This was angrily denied by the Armed Forces Joint Command.

It seems that in this case the armed forces were not involved, and were indignant that the despised police tried to use them for an alibi. But that is not to say that the armed forces have a particularly clean record in Ayacucho. On the contrary, since they were placed in overall charge of counter-insurgency operations by a reluctant President Fernando Belaunde in July the body count has soared, and mass graves containing the bodies of people previously arrested by military patrols have begun to appear.

There is no doubt that the guerrillas have pursued their 'prolonged people's war' with ferocity, murdering alleged informers and attacking villages regarded as unco-operative. They must bear much of the blame for the spiralling violence in a country which only returned to democratic rule in 1980, after 12 years of military regimes. But the methods of the security forces are uncomfortably reminiscent of Argentina, Chile and Uruguay in the 1970s, or of Guatemala today. All of those were or became military dictatorships. The 71-year-old President Belaunde has less than a year of his four-year term to go, but he knows he is treading a tightrope. □

Carlos Augusto Caamaño

Before the 'ceasefire': captured MNR rebels put on show for foreign diplomats . . .

Carlos Augusto Caamaño

. . . and government troops in traditional victory dance

MOZAMBIQUE

STEALING THE DREAM

Joseph Hanlon looks at the results of the 'ceasefire talks' with South Africa

FIGHTING continues in Mozambique, despite claims three weeks ago of a ceasefire. At first, it seemed that South Africa had finally agreed to abide by the Nkomati non-agression pact signed on 16 March. But even Foreign Minister Pik Botha, who at first trumpeted South African 'peacemaking', later admitted that the agreement was only that there *should* be a ceasefire, and that there would be three way talks (involving South Africa, Mozambique, and the MNR, the forces fighting the Mozambique government) to try to agree on one.

So South Africa has used its successful destabilisation to extract yet another concession from Mozambique's Frelimo, giving little in return. The new concession is talking face to face with the MNR for the first time, and possibly allowing South African troops into Mozambique. Concessions in March included expelling nearly all of the African National Congress (ANC) and allowing in South African business people and tourists. Clearly further concessions will be demanded before South Africa finally backs down.

The nature of further demands was shown by the presence of Evo Fernandes as head of the MNR delegation at the Pretoria talks three weeks ago. Fernandes is white and Portuguese, one of the hundreds of thousands of right-wing *retornados* who fled Mozambique and Angola at independence in 1975 and have railed against the victorious guerrillas ever since. In colonial times, Fernandes worked in Beira and had close links to the PIDE secret police.

One of the central demands of South Africa (with Portugal putting pressure on Mozambique to agree) is that the *retornados* should be allowed to come back and reclaim their abandoned properties. Although the MNR has involved the *retornados*, it is largely a creature of Rhodesian and then South Africa security services. However, the West now seems to have accepted the Mozambique government's long-standing claim that the MNR (Mozambique National Resistance or Renamo) is not a political opposition. The only choice, then, is to create one, and the *retornados* form one component.

Another section of the opposition will be the 18,000 MNR men still in training camps in South Africa. The demand is that they should not simply be returned to Mozambique under a general amnesty, but be given some sort of privileged position, with places in the army, civil service, and perhaps even one or more ministerships in the government. The United States has offered to fund showcase resettlement centres.

Together, the *retornados* and returned MNR men could form the basis of the first-ever political opposition to Frelimo inside the country. Members of the middle class, whose life styles have come under increasing pressure, and who have high hopes that the Nkomati Accord will bring them luxury goods from South Africa, may well join the opposition.

The final group would be private farmers, a mix of Portuguese who did not flee, *retornados*, and would-be kulaks (larger peasant farmers). The United States has already thrown its support behind this group, announcing that agricultural assistance under its new programme will go *only* to this group, and not to state farms, co-operatives, or even to ordinary peasant farmers.

UNDOUBTEDLY the most insidious part of the process has been the way the United States has used its emergency aid to re-establish itself in Mozambique. As previously shown (*NS* 3 February), Mozambique's famine was more a result of South African destabilisation than of the drought. The US held back until it was convinced that Mozambique was 'turning toward the West', then forced Mozambique to accept the presence of a series of right-wing Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), including World Vision.

One of the biggest problems for the US has been that, since the expulsion of the CIA in 1981, it has had poor intelligence about the

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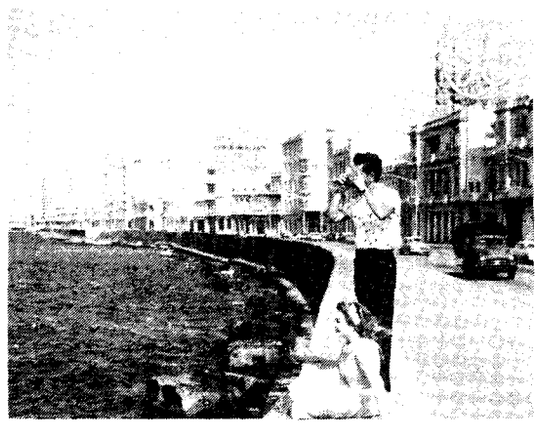

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interior of Mozambique. Under the new aid deal, staff from the US 'disaster relief' organisation CARE will be in offices in each provincial capital — ideal watching and listening posts, with legitimate reasons to travel throughout the country to look at the progress of the war and any growing opposition.

The final step is to undermine the credibility of Frelimo. A priest in Nicaragua, who had been in Chile before, said that the US realised it had made a mistake and overthrown Allende too soon, while there was still a dream of what socialism could be. In Nicaragua they are trying to destroy the dream first. That is clearly the idea in Mozambique, too.

Destabilisation has been aimed almost entirely at economic targets: burning shops, mining roads, and attacking trains and lorries. The goal has been to make life impossible for the peasants who form the backbone of Frelimo's support. Frelimo's own agricultural policies did not always help.

THE MOST subtle twist, however, has been to prevent Frelimo correcting its mistakes. At its Fourth Party Congress last year, it accepted its failure to support the peasants. It agreed on a new programme of more consumer goods for rural areas, higher producer prices, and more support for small private business. It seemed just the sort of thing being urged by the West, and a shift toward peasant capitalism it would have been happy to support. Instead, the West imposed a virtual economic boycott on Mozambique.

The excuse was that Mozambique, like many other developing countries, admitted it could not pay its debts and asked for them to be renegotiated. The response was to freeze all credits, until Mozambique agreed to a comprehensive package including joining the IMF and negotiating a settlement with South Africa. In particular, the freeze prevented Mozambique from importing consumer goods to support peasant farmers, and to restart the economy. Only the USSR, China, and France (breaking ranks with other Western creditors) supplied vital consumer goods and thus, ironically, backed Frelimo's shift to peasant capitalism.

Last month, Mozambique joined the IMF and World Bank, which will lead to another turn of the screw. The rapid expansion of health and education to rural areas is one of Mozambique's biggest successes, and it remains the basis of Frelimo's popularity, despite the economic problems. (When the MNR attacks a village, it always burns the health post and tries to kill the teacher.) The standard IMF package will demand cutbacks to health and education (and to food subsidies which assist urban workers), pulling one of the last props out from under Frelimo.

So the package will be complete: destroying the dream of socialism, breaking down the popularity of Frelimo, and creating a new internal opposition. Frelimo will have to absorb that opposition into the government (where it will whittle away at whatever socialist pretensions Frelimo has) or the West will demand 'free elections'. □

Joseph Hanlon is the author of the just published Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire, *Zed Books, £6.95*

SOUTH AFRICA

BLUE AND WHITE DISASTER

Phillip van Niekerk reports on an asbestos scandal

Johannesburg

BRITISH COMPANIES Turner and Newall and Cape Industries are deeply implicated in an asbestos scandal, which could be South Africa's largest public health disaster.

The effects of asbestos mining in the Transvaal — both the extraordinary high incidence of disease and the failure of mining companies to clean up asbestos pollution in mined-out areas — have now come out.

An estimated 200,000 residents of the Lebowa 'homeland' in northeastern Transvaal are living in an area contaminated by dumps left over from mining operations which in some cases ceased decades ago. Deadly 'blue' and 'brown' asbestos dumps line and spill into the roads which are made of asbestos. Houses are made from asbestos bricks and plaster and children have been using the dumps as sandpits.

Until the press made it an issue — pictures showed children playing happily on the dumps — the local villagers had no idea about the hazards of the substance. Turner and Newall, through its subsidiary Dublin Consolidated Asbestos, still owns some property and mining rights in the area of the Strydpoort Mountains, where asbestos mining took place.

But the bulk of its land in the area, much of it contaminated, has been sold at high price in recent years to the South African government. It is earmarked for incorporation into Lebowa, which means thousands more people are to be settled there. In common with other companies in the area, such as Associated Asbestos and Lagerdraai Asbestos (in which United States Steel has a major interest), no attempts have been made to clean up the pollution prior to the sale.

The discovery of the dumps by the press was made during investigations following a strike at the nearby Penge mine, the last operating asbestos mine in the area and the only amosite, or brown asbestos, mine in the world. Workers demanding improvements in starvation wages occupied their hostels before being evicted.

But the issue of the strike itself became secondary when casualty figures for the mine were leaked to the press. They showed that more than 800 miners were compensated for asbestosis over the past decade. In the last year alone, more than 130 — almost 10 per cent of the workforce — were victims of the disease. In South Africa, compensation for industrial injury is based on race. White workers are paid out substantially more than black workers for the same diseases. Whites receive R24,000 (worth about £12,000) for fully-developed asbestosis, or cancer; and get a monthly pension. Black workers get R1,490 and no pension.

Diseased black workers at Penge are usually dismissed and return to the poverty-stricken villages of Lebowa, where employment opportunities are extremely rare, especially for those incapacitated by disease.

THE ORIGINS of the high incidence of disease at the mine were not difficult to establish. Fibre level reports showed that as recently as a year ago counts as high as 130 fibres per millilitre — 16 times higher than the then South African limit and 325 times higher than the British limit of 0.2 fibres per ml — were recorded in the mine's mill.

Pat Hart, Managing Director of the Griqualand Exploration and Finance Company (GEFCO), claims most of the casualty figures are the result of conditions at the mine more than a decade ago — and concedes they inherited 'a mess'. Until 1979, the mine was owned by the British company, Cape Industries, formerly Cape Asbestos, and was brought in 1981 by GEFCO, which now has a world monopoly in the production of amosite and crocidolite (blue asbestos).

Hart disclosed up-to-date statistics showing improvements made in recent years. Still, his figures revealed that 80 per cent of workers at the mine are working in fibre levels higher on average than the British limit. In certain key areas, the mine was not even meeting the South African limit of 2 fibres per ml introduced at the beginning of the year. This limit was first introduced in Britain in 1969, but has since been lowered because it underestimated the consequent asbestosis and lung cancer rates.

Despite fibre counts at Penge routinely higher than the legal limit, there has not been a single prosecution of the company by the Government Mining Engineer. Nor has the GME accepted responsibility for the dumps in the mined out areas. Two-and-a-half months after the first report appeared in the *Rand Daily Mail*, the only action taken by the GME has been to warn a few small businessmen, who were making bricks out of the asbestos, to cease operations.

No action has been taken against any of the companies and the GME has played down the extent of the hazard. But the Lebowa homeland's director of health, Dr A.M. Makunyane, said: 'The big fellows have done this to us. They came here to dig out the money and they left the people behind to suffer the consequences'.

Makunyane says that the full extent of disease will never be determined. Inadequate health and hospital facilities mean that people in the villages die and are buried at home, without going to hospitals or having post-mortems. The situation is worsened by the abandoned mines being in and around a black homeland. In recent years there has been a vast influx of people into the area. According to official census figures, the population doubled from 1970 to 1980.

This expanding population has been due both to the apartheid policy of forced resettlement as well as to 'influx control' — which has forced thousands of black people off white-owned farms. Some of the polluted properties bought from Turner and Newall and the other companies are sparsely populated at present. Unless the South African government is forced to exclude these asbestos-contaminated areas from the Lebowa homeland, the health of the thousands of people moving into the area will be at grave risk. □

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LETTERS

Another country, another war

John Saunders, Hassocks, W. Sussex

About William Shawcross's book on Cambodia, your man Pilger (*NS* 12 October) does go on so: stage centre, front, chuntering away over ancient battles, and not noticing we are in a different war. Without disturbing the chap, dear Editor, could you arrange for someone to review the book that Shawcross actually wrote?

I was in Kampuchea for seven months in 1979 and 1980 as head of the UNICEF operation. As elected chairman of the coordination group representing all the aid agencies there, UN and voluntary, I was in a good position to know what was happening throughout the country.

Two suggestions for your reviewer. The main purpose of the book, accurately explained in clear print at the beginning, is to consider the responses of the world to calamity in Cambodia, and to the efforts of the humanitarian organizations to help. Pilger's dismissive sneer at 'a mass of who said what to whom' demonstrates that he has not understood what the book is about, nor put in a tiny portion of the effort expended by Shawcross in attempting to get at the fiercely conflicting realities of this relief operation. Of such operations in the last 30 years, this was certainly the most appallingly complex, and among the biggest.

The efforts of United Nations and voluntary agency people were aimed at helping Cambodians, while trying to keep these emergency operations as free as possible of the political pressures which came from every corner. I suggest that anyone concerned for the Third World should read this book and try, like Shawcross, to understand where we succeeded, and where we failed, and why. The people who spent long months in Cambodia did so out of a sense of duty to others. That was not enough, despite their cool eye for politicians of every stripe.

Please also mention to your reviewer that the book is not a re-run of Shawcross's bestseller *Sideshow*; nor a treatise on local and big power politics; nor an attempt to remember or forget the Vietnam experience. It does explain, however, what political cross-fire can do to a relief operation.

In 40 years of international life, working in and for Third World countries, I have never known a more difficult task. Those of us who were in the thick of it, and the governments and peoples who supported such operations, should welcome constructive criticism from independent sources. Shawcross has tried to provide just that, and his scrutiny spares no one, including himself.

The book is not perfect. I certainly do not agree with all he writes. No one who has attempted to wrestle with this tremendously difficult subject could do any other than encourage informed criticism. We have not yet finished with Cambodia, nor heard the last of disasters. What we can do without is confused political comment.

I thought I saw . . .

Conrad Jameson, London SW1

I must have nodded off while watching the Labour Party conference on TV as your leader entitled 'Blackpool 1984: good in parts' (*NS* 5 October) must surely refer to passages I didn't see and which, alas, I might never find out about as it doesn't mention when these good parts happened or what they were about. My own recollection is of decidedly bad parts, though it could be that I not only nodded off but slipped into a nightmare.

I saw, or thought I saw, a massively carried vote in which only the police were blamed for violence and intimidation in the miners' strike. Throwing concrete or firing rivet guns or dropping stones from a bridge onto the cabs of coal-laden lorries — all such actions were presumably a last resort among peaceable miners who wanted to persuade their fellows ever so nicely but were sore-tried and provoked by police interventions. Henceforth, said the conference, police shouldn't even try to protect those crossing picket lines.

I also saw, or thought I saw, the Bennite Left that now dominates the constituencies voting against OMOV, not because they were concerned about unseating right-wing Labour MPs (whom they can unseat anyway under Kinnock's proposal to make OMOV voluntary) but because they thought that the divisive issue of party democracy that had brought them to power would be, well, divisive — almost as divisive, one is tempted to add, as it was at the time of the Wembley conference when the Bennites first created their power base.

Mind, I can't be sure in my testimony. My usual checking up system of reading *New Statesman* has proved of no avail as, no matter how hard I looked, I could find in its columns no mention of such matters whatsoever.

Czech-think

Carolyn Taylor & Katherine Riley, London SE22

We thought you may be interested to know what the socialist republic of Czechoslovakia thinks of the *New Statesman*.

On a recent holiday to Czechoslovakia we were asked at the border whether we had any magazines or papers in the car. We produced some back copies of *NS* which formed part of our holiday reading. The Czech guards questioned us as to their content and examined them carefully, taking particular note of one article entitled 'Sex, sadism and the Princess' (*NS* 21 September). It took only one telephone call to higher authority for all our copies to be confiscated. One wonders why!

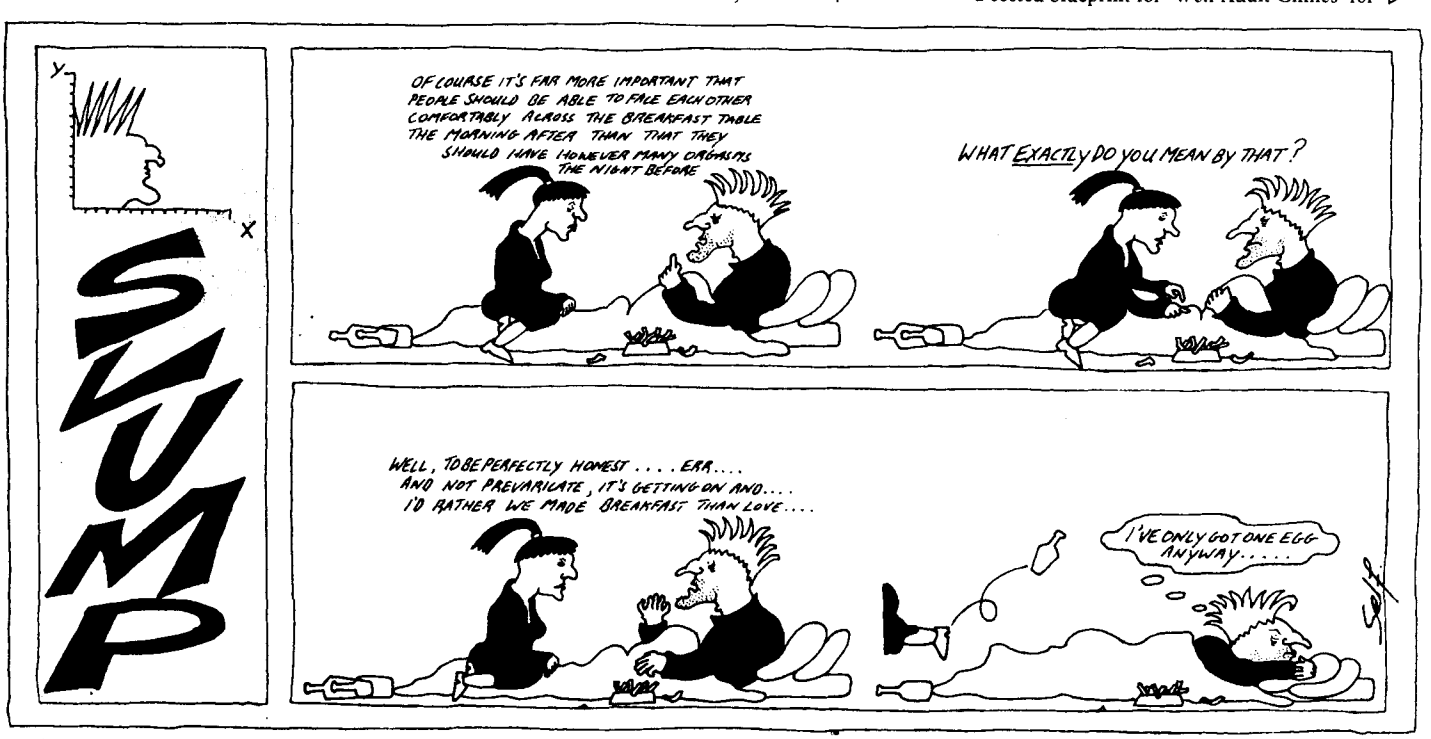
Well woman clinics

P. Reynolds, Secretary, Bury Community Health Council, Bury, Lancs.

I must correct one or two inaccuracies contained in your article 'Does doctor know best?' (*NS* 5 October).

There has never been any resistance to the principle of drop-in Well Women Centres in Bury and certainly not from me. We have questioned the value of some of the centres we have studied, particularly those which operate an appointment system, as this in our opinion defeats the whole purpose of the centres. We also question the needlessly artificial separation of female and male health care that has become a feature of Well Women Clinics.

The second inaccuracy concerned my Council's policy on this matter. We have not only produced a costed blueprint for 'Well Adult Clinics' for ▷


Y
X
SLUMP
OF COURSE IT'S FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAT PEOPLE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FACE EACH OTHER COMFORTABLY ACROSS THE BREAKFAST TABLE THE MORNING AFTER THAN THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE HOWEVER MANY ORGASMS THE NIGHT BEFORE
WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
WELL, TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST .... ERR.... AND NOT PREVARICATE, IT'S GETTING ON AND.... I'D RATHER WE MADE BREAKFAST THAN LOVE....
I'VE ONLY GOT ONE EGG ANYWAY.....

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Bury, but this was presented to the Health Authority weeks ago. We are in fact now at the next stage, which is discussing a timetable for implementation.

A non-nuclear defence policy

R.R. Pearce, Ipswich

The formal adoption by the Labour Party of a non-nuclear defence policy seems to have caused very little stir: predictable disagreement from Callaghan; predictable sneers and condemnation from Heseltine.

But it is not enough for Labour to base its argument on moral grounds: no one expects governments to be moral anyway. Unless the electorate can be persuaded of the military logic of a non-nuclear policy, such a policy will lose the next election, not win it. Such logic should not be too difficult to demonstrate: there are two simple questions to be answered. First, which nuclear weapons in this country are defensive? And, second, which weapons are deterrent?

People have grown so used to hearing Heseltine shout that the more missiles we have, the better we are defended, and the more certainly is an attack deterred, that they have ceased to think, or just refuse to think. The reaction to such films as *Threads* and *The Day After* is as likely to be that we must have more arms, to prevent such catastrophes, as that we must get rid of all nuclear weapons. So it is essential that the answers to those two questions are so clearly understood that people will accept them even in the face of so-called military experts.

There are, in fact, no defensive nuclear weapons, except perhaps battlefield weapons, and then only if they are used before they are attacked. There are no deterrent weapons in this country, except Polaris submarines actually at sea.

It should be so obvious: all the various bombs and missiles in this country, and the submarine bases, and, incidentally, the intelligence and communications centres — all could be destroyed in one blanket attack. Indeed, from the enemy's point of view, it is essential that they be destroyed. (Conversely, from the American point of view, their only military value is if they pre-empt such an attack; the opposite of deterrence!) The same applies to all NATO Europe. The threat of retaliation by Polaris would be entirely inadequate to deter attack on the hundreds of land weapons.

The government appears to comfort itself that the real deterrent is the American ICBM force; and jeers at the unilateralists for sheltering under its umbrella. But belief in this as a deterrent depends on the belief that the USSR — as always, the enemy — will itself believe that if Britain were destroyed the US would launch its ICBMs and so invite its own destruction, just to avenge an already incinerated and irradiated ally. Some hope — or fear! The American ICBMS, and other possible intercontinental weapons, form no part of a European deterrent, but are simply one side of the equation of Mutually Assured Destruction — for Super-Powers only.

'No first use' is not a first-step policy: if the land-based and air-borne weapons in Europe are not used first, they will be destroyed. But there could be one later step: with no nuclear weapons in Britain, Polaris would perhaps be an adequate deterrent to the 'nuclear blackmail' which some people fear; and at least its 'first use' would not be essential.

The Labour Party must begin a defence education campaign quickly. There is a powerful propaganda machine to beat. And that is not all: the United States will strongly oppose the policy proposed, and, particularly if it looks like succeeding, it has a weapon, in the CIA, linked with British security services, with wide experience and no scruples.

FEEDBACK

What's wrong with censorship?

DAVID EDGAR (*NS* 5 October) argues a cogent case against the censorship of 'video nasties'. Yet his argument displays all the weaknesses of the liberal and Left position on censorship.

Edgar has two main contentions. First, that seeing a representation of a heinous act is something of a completely different order to the actual commission of that act. In the hysteria that surrounded the promotion and passing of the Video Recordings Bill, this was too often forgotten by those who should have known better, including the Labour front bench. His second contention is that even children pick up this principle at 'their second pantomime'. This is a vital point since the hysteria initially whipped up by the *Daily Mail* came to centre upon the supposed damage done to children by 'video nasties'. So if Edgar makes two major points which effectively demolish the right-wing's case against 'video nasties', why do I find this article such a problem?

The weakness of Edgar's case lies in its conclusion. He seems to condone a libertarian position, opposing any form of censorship. His article is an eloquent statement of the Left's dilemma in the face of a right-wing pro-censorship campaign. Since the Right are for it, it seems to follow that liberals and leftists must be against it — in the name of free speech, liberty of expression and the right of the individual to enjoy images of rape and murder if that's what they want, even though we personally don't condone it. And there the argument rests.

Or did so until feminism taught us woolly-headed men a different set of political priorities. The feminist critique hovers around in Edgar's article like a guilty conscience, acknowledged, yet never fully. Many feminists do not seem to have much truck with notions of freedom of speech when historically such freedoms have scarcely been extended in their direction in any meaningful way. Instead they have a clear and hard-headed attitude to censorship. They see it as an important area of struggle over the meanings, images and representations that are deemed acceptable in our society. Instead of a defence of an abstract concept of 'liberty of expression', they substitute the slogan of 'Censorship, yes. . .but on our terms'.

Within the byzantine structures of film censorship in Britain, this strategy has had a significant effect as James Ferman, the Secretary of the British Board of Film Censors, is very willing to admit. A decade of lobbying has placed 'the exploitation and degradation of women' as one of the central objections that the censors make towards films submitted to them. And before the emotional gold-mine of children was established as the central focus of the 'video nasties' campaign, this same question of women figured largely in the scare literature.

The incongruity of such a complaint issuing from Mary Whitehouse or the *Daily Mail* should not lead to a dismissal of the feminist campaign as the dupe of right-wing forces. On the contrary, it should lead to a further political reflection: how can censorship from a progressive position really be effected without throwing out the baby with the bathwater?

Progressive movements in our society constantly run up against the same problem: there are indeed grossly objectionable images — both sexist and racist — massively in circulation. If we argue simply from a platform that endorses an abstract concept of 'liberty of expression and circulation' then we are simultaneously depriving ourselves of the means to prevent the circulation of those images, and playing into the hands of a moralistic Right that has none of our liberal scruples.

The British Left, insular to the last, has tended to think of censorship exclusively in the terms of our current practice. For film, there is a secretive body, accountable to no one, operating with secret criteria (the British Board of Film Censors). For print, we have an archaic and unworkable Act (Obscene Publications), administered with the huge expense, delays and frivolities of the High Court, or at the whim of Chief Constables and customs officials. For broadcasting, there is an informal structure, a phone call from the Home Secretary or Mary Whitehouse. This whole chaotic system is in no sense democratic. A democratic form of censorship would be public, speedy and inexpensive. And of these three criteria, the public nature of censorship would be paramount.

The act of censorship is an act in the struggle around meanings that takes place every day in our society. It is in a continuum with refusing to be complicit with racist slurs or sexist jokes. But everyone is embarrassed by censorship, so public debates about what should be censored take the form of hysterical campaigns of the kind we have just witnessed over 'video nasties'. Then a new piece of repressive and/or unworkable legislation results, and everyone forgets the matter. The problem with the new Video Recordings Act is that it is repressive and all too workable. It vastly extends and legitimises the hitherto *ad hoc* powers of the British Board of Film Censors, who are eager to swashbuckle their way through a whole new audio-visual industry.

But they still do not have to make their criteria public; they still do not have to publish the reasons why they have committed each and every act of censorship; they still have no adequate tribunal of appeal whose deliberations are public. Such a procedure would dramatically change the geography of censorship in Britain, by making it a regular item of public debate. The censors remain secretive and arbitrary because we have never asked for any other form of censorship. In their work, the censors remain relatively impervious to changes in opinion; sloppy and collusive in their dealings (confidential of course) with those whose property is being censored. The BBFC now has responsibility for all home video as well as cinema films under the terms of an Act which theoretically would prevent the Natural Childbirth Trust from showing videos about birth to its classes. We urgently need a different structure of censorship — one which fully acknowledges that censorship is an important arena in the struggle for and against meanings and representations. Such a censor, subject to continual scrutiny and discussion, would soon have to take full account of Edgar's contention that in fiction 'it is not degrading or "desensitising" but enriching and sometimes ennobling to witness extremes of experience which we could not bear in reality'.

John Ellis

John Ellis is producer of Visions, *Channel 4's programme about cinema*

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Radio Times Hulton Picture Library

The storm bursts

The foundation of the New Statesman *in 1913 proved to be the last of the enduring bodies which Beatrice Webb was active in creating. From the start of the war in 1914 she became increasingly depressed by the devastation and futility of a war in which she desperately tried to find some purpose. But from 1917 the Russian Revolution and the accelerating ferment of political and industrial discontent in the British labour movement helped revive her energy; and she continues her observations of the historic upheavals which have shaped socialist and trade union politics to this day. The second of our extracts from Volume Three of her diaries, published this week by Virago, starts with the onset of her six month 'nervous breakdown'*

24 June 1916

I have had, in the last few days, a deplorable proof of the lack of Christian Science in myself. Owing to certain physical symptoms showing a steady decline in energy and weight for some months past, I became obsessed by the conviction that I had an internal growth, that this would necessitate an operation and that I should die under it. Each link in the chain of proof was unsound, but to my distempered imagination, each supposition seemed an uncontrovertible fact. And I even infected poor Sidney with my fear. So we journeyed up to London with melancholy expectation, to see a specialist. He dispelled my fears, telling me there was no sign of any organic trouble. I was to eat more and, if sleeplessness continued, I was to take a sleeping draught. I feel humiliated — humiliated alike by my absurd obsession and by the absence of courage, even if it had been justified, in meeting physical pain and death. With millions of young men facing death and dying on the battlefields of Europe, it seems contemptible for an old woman, who has had a full and happy life, to blink miserably at the inevitable end.

Above: Labour unrest in 1919 — a Glasgow striker is struck on the head in a baton charge by police: 'From the end of the war until the defeat of the miners' strike in 1920, the country was shaken by a series of bitter industrial conflicts'

Out of order

Because of a paste-up error, the 1913 and 1914 extracts from these diaries, published last week, were printed out of sequence. We apologise to any readers who may have been confused by the eccentric running order of these entries.

13 September 1916

A fortnight away from London to give our two servants the necessary holidays — a week at the Fabian school and a week with GBS (Bernard Shaw) at the hotel nearby. The time has been painful for me, because I have suffered from perpetual head trouble; throbbing and dizziness during the night destroying sleep, and dizziness and pain during the day — a nervous breakdown as

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disheartening as it has been disagreeable. Clearly I am in a rotten state, and something must be done before I can get to work again . . . GBS was at his best, witty, wise and outstandingly good-natured. He is remarkably virile just now — bathes or works all day — and he is really stupendous in the output of letters and articles.

From its beginning as a committee of civil servants, the Reconstruction Committee was reformed in February 1917 with lay members, including Beatrice Webb, charged with making recommendations for how society should be reconstructed after the war.

18 March 1917

I was not able to attend the first meeting of the Reconstruction Committee, addressed by the Prime Minister. The summons came after we had left London for the week-end. I feel old and weak, and if I had not Sidney to inspire and help me I should think I had made a mistake in joining the Committee. The life I should enjoy, at present, would be a comfortable small country house, noiseless, except for birds and the rustling of water and wind, with my diaries to type . . . But the *New Statesman* and this new Reconstruction Committee are going to keep us in London, with its noise and its dirt and its constant overstrain of nervous strength and consequent sleeplessness. What troubles me is the doubt whether my feelings of old age and weariness are justified physiologically or whether I am giving way to an obsession. I am in my sixtieth year; if it were not for the war I have a right to retire.

In June 1917, the Independent Labour Party and British Socialist Party (later the nucleus of the Communist Party) organised a conference in Leeds to express support for the (pre-Bolshevik) Russian Revolution and to establish workers' and soldiers' 'soviets' or councils in Britain. It was the first major test of British labour feeling on peace and revolution.

7 June 1917

The Leeds conference, welcomed by Massingham (the editor) in the *Nation* as the 'birth of a new party', is significant as proving the existence of a powerful ferment in the labour movement which may either lead to new growth or to progressive disintegration. We fear that it is only one among many signs that the labour movement after the war will break into internecine struggles which will eliminate it as a force in national politics. The thousand or more delegates to the Leeds conference were, so one of them declared, 'mentally drunk', and quite incapable of coherent thinking. They were swayed by emotions: an emotion towards peace and an emotion towards workers' control.

In 1918, G. D. H. Cole married Margaret Postgate.

Margaret Cole

Margaret Postgate, familiarly known as 'Mopps' because of the mop of short thick black wavy hair in which is set swarthy complexion, mobile mouth, sharp nose and chin and most brilliantly defiant eyes, is the daughter of a professor of classics, one of a typical university family. She is herself a distinguished Cambridge graduate. She succeeded Arnot as paid secretary to the Research Department and shocked us folk with her daringly unconventional ways and rebellious attitude. She kept what hours she chose, smoked the masculine pipe . . . but, though her manners have been disorderly, her ways have been straight: she has wit and reasoning power of an unusual quality, and she is fundamentally sweet-tempered and kind. Courtship and marriage have increased her womanliness and self-restraint. She and Cole seem perfect intellectual comrades.

5 October 1917

This war seems a universal bankruptcy of human intelligence and human goodwill. It adds to my depression that the problems involved in its settlement are wholly outside my grasp. I have come to no conclusions as to the fundamental cause of it, or as to the right end of it. But there is one consolation. The catastrophe is so huge and so discreditable to the governments of the world that it must lead to big changes. Never again will the manual workers accept the position of outcasts from all that makes for civilization; never again will they agree to a position of social servility; never again will they trust the representatives of the ruling class to dictate foreign and colonial policy without even deigning to discuss it. Their leaders will fall into all sorts of traps, but the great multitude behind will press forward, stumbling slowly over innumerable obstacles to a world based on social equality . . .

Meanwhile revolutionary ideas, more especially of the syndicalist type, are being discredited by the collapse of Russia. The folly of the I.L.P. in acclaiming the Russian Soviet government of 'Workmen and Soldiers' representatives' as the 'new model' is becoming every day more obvious. The success of the Labour Party depends largely on how far its leaders can free themselves of the old assumptions of the capitalist state whilst keeping themselves free from the cant of anarchic rebellion against any form of deliberately ordered social action.

In 1917, Arthur Henderson, the leader of the Labour Party, withdrew from the war-time coalition and set about forming Labour into a national political party capable of forming a government. For this it needed a new form and programme. Sidney Webb was the principal architect of the new constitution which, for the first time, allowed for individual members and committed the party to achieving the common ownership of the means of production. The Labour Party met to discuss it in January 1918.

21 January 1918

Henderson is nervous about the rejection of his new constitution by the block vote of the big unions. The opposition of the cotton delegates is led by Tom Shaw, a pro-war socialist. He wants the Labour Party to remain a close preserve of the officials of the great unions, acting as a select group in the House of Commons, making terms with either of the principal parties and securing places for

Radio Times Hulton Picture Library

Kerensky

Alexander Kerensky was Russian Prime Minister between the fall of the Tsar and the Bolshevik Revolution. He addressed the Labour Party Conference in June 1918.

He is a great orator — that fact shone through the strange but musical language which not a single man among the delegates understood. But he seems, as one watches his expression, to lack executive will and intellectual stability — he gave you no confidence that he knew what he wanted done. One can see him dominating masses of Russians by the nervous magnetism of his personality and then, when they crowd behind him, hesitating which way to lead them. He is a creature and a creator of impulse: is he not an originator and executor of a possible plan of campaign? He appealed passionately for help, but he gave no indication as to the character of the help he demanded. There was, at the end, a disappointing sense of vagueness and futility.

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leading trade union officials either as Ministers or as permanent officials. He dislikes the advent of the ambitious middle-class politician or the intrusion of the missionary intellectual. This conservative section is, to some extent, backed up by the revolutionary syndicalist who is against 'parliamentarianism' . . . The I.L.P. opposition to the new constitution is from an exactly contrary standpoint. The leaders of the I.L.P. want to construct a 'People's Party' in which the trade unions would take their place in the constituency organisation, either as local bodies or as individuals. Henderson wants to make the best of both worlds. By the new constitution he aims at combining the mass vote and financial support of the big battalions incorporated in the national unions with the initiative and enthusiasm of the brainworking individual members of the local Labour parties.

Meanwhile the leaders of the labour movement are distinctly uneasy about the spirit of revolt among the rank and file, which openly proclaims its sympathy with the lurid doings in Petrograd.

Appeal of the Chair

1 September 1918

The day before I left Presteigne I had a telegram from the Prime Minister asking me, in no uncertain language, to be chairman of a committee on the relation of men's and women's wages. The subject did not attract me, but I was flattered and excited at being offered the chairmanship and forthwith wired a gracious acceptance. Great was my discountenance when the following day I received an apologetic telegram annoucing that Mr Justice Atkin was to be chairman and that I had only been invited to be a common or garden member of yet another committee. It appears that an incompetent typist had repeated the message to the selected chairman to all the members of the committee, and that they each and all accepted the chairmanship. It remains to be added that we all accepted the position with dignified good humour.

On 4 November, the short-lived German 'revolution' began, effectively ending the war.

4 November 1918

The absence of public rejoicing and sombre looks of private persons arises, I think, from preoccupation as to the kind of world we shall all live in when peace has come. Burdened with a huge public debt, living under the shadow of swollen government departments, with a working class seething with discontent, and a ruling class with its traditions and standards topsy-turvy, with civil servants suspecting businessmen and businessmen conspiring to protect their profits, and all alike abusing the politician, no citizen knows what is going to happen to himself or his children, or to his own social circle, or to the state or to the Empire. All that he does know is that the old order is seriously threatened with dissolution without any new order being in sight.

From the end of the war until the defeat of the engineers in 1922, the country was shaken by a series of bitter industrial conflicts.

8 February 1919

Sidney and I watch the chaotic strikes — the most melodramatic being the strike of the London electricians — with complete calm. The men will be beaten, but in being beaten they will undermine this government by unwittingly convincing organised labour that the British citizen will not tolerate the direct action of a minority as a means of gaining its public ends. In order to win, constitutional methods will have to be adopted. The first effect, however, is to disintegrate the trade union movement and to damage the Labour Party in the eyes of the common run of men and women, especially women electors.

Of all the unions, the government was most afraid of the miners who had been campaigning for a shorter week, higher wages and nationalisation of their industry. In an appeasing gesture, Lloyd George set up the Sankey Commission on the mines, whose members included Sidney Webb. An interim report on 20 March carried the proposals of the three factions on the commission. Tom Jones was acting secretary of the War Cabinet.

20 March 1919

This afternoon, while Sidney, Tawney and I were having a cup of tea, Tom Jones broke in upon us in a great state of excitement. He had seen the three reports. The War Cabinet was meeting at six o'clock to consider what they would do. They were determined not to be bullied into conceding the miners' demands — *especially* nationalisation . . . Churchill and Curzon were intent on a battle with the miners — all the arrangements had been made — tanks were ready, the army could be depended on, food would be withdrawn and so on. What could be done? asked Jones in genuine concern. Could anything be done to bring pressure to bear on the Cabinet, this evening, to alter their decision? . . . Jones said that the Cabinet would prefer to grant all the other demands rather than promise nationalisation. 'The government is prepared to give away the whole annual product of the nation in advance and more than the whole annual product rather than tamper with property,' I interjected. 'The Exchequer could subsidise the bad mines so that the price of coals should not be raised — the Cabinet would be willing to do that. They would do anything from shooting the miners or starving their wives and children to subsidising profits or wages out of taxes to avoid nationalisation,' Jones answered.

1 July 1920

The Labour-Socialist delegates from Russia have brought over many diverse impressions of Russia. All agreed on the wicked policy of intervention. By a large majority they condemn the Soviet form of government for Great Britain. Some of them have seen a horrible spectre of socialism in the Soviet despotism — a new creed autocracy more terrible than any theocracy. The conclusion to which Sidney and I had come from a distance — that the Soviet government had changed its basic ideal from workers' control and general anarchic freedom to the rigid consumers' collectivism — seems to be true. The Soviet government is the 'servile state' in being — the very thought of which was denounced by the rebels of 1910-14. But it is a servile state run by fanatics who refuse any compromise with the 'bourgeois fetish' of personal freedom. It is only fair to add that the fanaticism in question is the faith in the common good as interpreted by the Communists.

The mines were not nationalised and on 1 April government war-time control over the mines (which had forced the competing coal-owners to implement a national agreement) ended. The miners went on strike.

14 April 1921

The Labour storm which has been beating up for the last two years at last burst. I do not know whether other people are as tired as I am of these storms, but though this one is catastrophic in its bigness, I am merely bored by it. We tell each other that it means a good deal: the miners have a splendid case, there was never so great a solidarity of working-class feeling and action. With so much fervour and determination, *something must happen*. And yet it all seems to be a futility which has little constructive element in it. Of course there will be another compromise: one side or the other will get scared and temporarily give way. But no progress will be made towards a better state of things. □

The Diary of Beatrice Webb, Volume Three 1905-1924, 'The Power to Alter Things'. Edited by Norman and Jeanne Mackenzie. Published by Virago Press, 18 October 1984, £20 hardback.

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Power and pistols

Mervyn Jones

Family Portrait with Fidel
CARLOS FRANQUI *Cape* £12.95 & £5.95

IS IT TRUE, as some say, that radical revolutions must inevitably end up in a new form of authoritarianism? Carlos Franqui, whose defiant hopefulness is one of the most attractive features of his book, would deny that any such law exists. Yet he asserts, with the aid of a great deal of alarming first-hand evidence, that this is what has happened in Cuba under Fidel Castro.

Franqui fought in the Sierra Maestra, held a key position in the 1960s as editor of *Revolución*, was sent on missions to Moscow and elsewhere, and belonged to Castro's inner circle. His fascinating book is written (or spoken, I should guess) with energy, vividness and extreme candour. He jumps from the page as a true Caribbean man — idealistic, combative, irrepressible in living life to the full, bursting with broad humour and sharp wit, impulsive, tactless. He reproaches Castro with many faults, but, most scathingly, with ponderous gravity. Indeed, when a sub-editor of *Revolución* appeared at a costume ball 'disguised as Groucho Marx and carrying *Das Kapital* under his arm', it may well have brought the house down, as Franqui tells us, but can scarcely have raised a smile at the next Central Committee meeting.

However, the picture I've just drawn underestimates Franqui, or rather depicts only one aspect of him. Although of working-class background — not a middle-class university graduate like Castro and Che Guevara — he evidently showed early signs of a penetrating and reflective mind. In the course of becoming a revolutionary, he discarded the traditional Hispanic attitudes that kept their hold on some of his comrades. Thus, he writes:

> Machismo creates its own way of life . . . Its negative hero is the dictator (one of Batista's mottoes was 'Batista is the Man') and its positive hero is the rebel. They are at odds in politics,but they both love power. And both despise homosexuality, as if every macho had his hidden gay side. The result was that the macho came to despise art, music, and culture in general: these are perceived as feminine or (worst yet) homosexual.

On the next page, Franqui drives the point home by remarking that 'the macho's favourite *objet d'art* is the pistol' and recording that the pistol is 'Fidel's principal fascination, the gift he gives to those he esteems'. One recalls the slogan that was vehemently repeated in the 1960s anywhere from Tien An Men Square to the Roundhouse: 'Power grows out of the barrel of a gun.'

When let loose in Europe, Franqui enthusiastically sought out writers and artists — notably Sartre and de Beauvoir, but also other less famous figures — and invited them to Cuba. Castro was willing to take advantage of their declarations of support, but distrusted them. I remember that, at the Cultural Congress in Havana in 1968, Castro delivered a speech containing a measured pat on the head for 'the intellectual workers', but requests by the visitors to meet him informally came to nothing. My own impression, based mainly on an art exhibition of considerable modernity and variety, was that Castro's indifference to culture led him to tolerance, and clearly that was better than Stalin. Franqui, however, gives examples of Cuban painters and poets who suffered official persecution, and of the sponsorship of third-rate propagandist art. His conclusion is typically direct: 'I realised that culture and power cannot co-exist.'

Mark Haddon

At the practical level, Franqui accuses Castro of inaccessibility — for weeks at crucial times, old comrades with nominally important positions couldn't get to see him or couldn't persuade him to enter into frank discussion — of intolerance, of countenancing acts of cruelty and of *Caudillismo*. To the visitor, Castro appeared to stand at the opposite extreme to the typical Latin-American *Caudillo* with his vast palace, his bullet-proof limousine, his ornate uniforms and row of medals. You didn't see pictures of Castro in public places; he had accumulated no money, his personal life was unostentatious, he always wore the guerrilla olive-green. Sartre thought that, if the leader turned up unannounced in a village, driving his own jeep, it was evidence of democracy. One didn't ask why, years after the fighting was over, Castro had to wear a military dress at all — and to carry a pistol.

As Franqui tells it, the explanation lies partly in Castro's personal inclinations and partly in his commitment to the Communists — notably his brother Raúl — who were, in the early days, a tiny and conspiratorial minority in the Fidelista movement. Franqui casts considerable light on the much-debated question of when Castro became a Communist. He reprints a letter written from prison in 1954, in which Castro declares that Marx was a genius and — more alarmingly — that Julius Caesar was a true revolutionary. He quotes Castro as saying in 1959: 'Only the old Communists and the Soviets know anything about Communism. We must be patient and learn from them.' Sadly, reverence for Marx wasn't the only attitude that Castro learned from the Soviets. To a critical letter from Franqui, he replied by saying: 'All criticism is opposition. All opposition is counter-revolutionary.'

Franqui's testimony can't be brushed aside, but in fairness we must bear in mind that it's the testimony of a man who left Cuba years ago (I'm told that he now lives in Italy, where the prevailing brand of Communism is doubtless more to his liking). The book ends abruptly in 1964, it appeared in Italian some time ago, and its 1984 publication in English is a comment on the leisurely pace of British publishing, not to mention British alertness to the outer world. Nothing in history is irreversible; reports from Cuba now describe it as a much more relaxed country. Although it would be vain to expect a public apologia from Castro, he is said to have advised the Sandinistas of Nicaragua: 'Don't make my mistakes.' As, indeed, they haven't. □

Alchemy

Naomi Mitchison

You Are Now Entering the Human Heart
JANET FRAME *The Women's Press* £3.95
An Angel at my Table: Autobiography 2
JANET FRAME *The Women's Press* £7.95

I CAN'T imagine the stories in **You Are Now Entering the Human Heart** having been written by anyone else. Some are only half a page long. One is as long as a snowman's life. None of them are what you might expect; you don't know at all what may happen next. Things may seem to be quite simple, but they twist and turn in the writer's hands. So what can she herself be like?

An Angel at my Table tells you part of it; enough, perhaps, to be going on with. The first part of Janet Frame's life was described in *To the Is-land* and it is, in a sense, the account of a childhood in a poor family, but one which is full of drama and emotions and different ways of coping with an outside world which does not include things like water closets, regular visits to the dentist or political interests, but does include the railway on which her father worked.

This second volume (by no means brought up to date, though I suppose she will one day walk out of wherever she happens to have been with another bit, for it is intolerable of her not tell) takes her into the grown-up world, dreadfully shy, unable to communicate even with those who genuinely wanted to help. She loved and hated her family, grew away from them, but was tied by pity and anger. She was obviously a good teacher, getting on with children as only someone not totally sane and respectable can do. Sane, sisters, sane? But who can be if sanity means taking the world as it would like to be taken? Anyway, Janet Frame spent a good many

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Janet Frame: 'all the time, behind everything, wanting to write'

years as a mental patient. This is excellent for us, as she — naturally — wrote a book about it called *Faces in the Water* — faces wrinkling into nothing as the old cow walks in to drink. But perhaps that is not at all the image she meant us to take? Anyhow, she gets out in the end, almost by accident, but feels she is doomed. Only, all the time, behind everything, wanting to write.

At first she wants 'to be a poet'. I believe a good many of us who have ended by becoming adequate prose writers really started with that wonderful picture of what they were going to do — to be — to find their immortality in. Occasionally she writes stories and tears them up. When something gets published she can't believe in it. But very gradually she finds that there are other people in the world who are not going to cage her or hurt her. She sees other places. She has told us meanwhile just how she worked as housemaid or waitress; clearly she did these things very well. But behind them the words were playing their games.

Among all this are descriptions of New Zealand, very definitely her country. I could wish the publisher had put in a map. My atlas makes New Zealand seem quite small, snuggling away down from big Australia. And clearly that is all wrong. It is varied, full of interesting plants and animals and birds with voices which she knows but we don't. Above all it is full of people whom we get to know.

And now: are these books, and her others, what might be called Women's Books? Yes, in a sense. She moves largely among families, mostly with women in the old traditional role, cooking, cleaning, giving birth and looking after children, seldom thinking beyond their own small communities. Perhaps this stereotype lasted longer in New Zealand than it did in Europe or Australia. Women were not active in the war that was the remote background of Janet's girlhood, meaning mainly that there were fewer eligible young men. The women in the stories are financially dependent on men; that does not rule out love, but then there can be love between master and servant.

Janet Frame escaped into the free world of words; here she began to be able to do magic; she can tie her readers up in it. Every now and then a bit of a poem shows its head. And poets, I think, are not specifically men or women, just themselves. All the same, these books would have been very different if they had been written by a man. In fact, a man couldn't have done it. It's as simple as that.

I hope I have persuaded readers that these are two books which they will learn from but, above all, which they will enjoy. If they happen to be interested in how someone lives through years of mental hospital treatment (or non-treatment) and somehow manages to heal herself, to become totally able to face life but with the gain of a desperate experience behind but not forgotten, they will find *An Angel at my Table* a rewarding case-book. Or again, if they are interested in the subtle use of the English language and syntax to create new images, then this is their book. Janet Frame has been travelling, getting to Europe, to America. There are signs of this in the short stories. But that will not take away from her having given us a new and authentic picture of her own country, of New Zealand. New Zealanders are proud of her; they should be. She has shown, so quietly, a mastery of the English language which dazzles one beyond ordinary praise. □

Nothing alarming

Joan Smith

Significant Sisters: Active Feminism 1839-1939
MARGARET FORSTER *Secker* £12.50

HALF THE WOMEN who appear in Margaret Forster's book, as she herself points out, denied they were feminists. Florence Nightingale had no patience with women who wanted to do men's work: she sneered that Elizabeth Blackwell, the world's first qualified female doctor, had 'only tried to be a man'. Elizabeth Blackwell herself refused to speak at a Woman's Rights convention because 'I believe that the chief source of the false position of women is *the inefficiency of women themselves* — the deplorable fact that they are so often careless mothers, weak wives, poor housekeepers, ignorant nurses and frivolous human beings'.

Herein lies a conundrum. The very women who brought about significant changes in the status of women denied they were feminists. Margaret Forster has the answer. If some women seem to detest feminism, it is because feminists have scared them off by too openly expressing their resentments. She goes on to offer a definition of feminism as 'a force for the good of both men and women', a soothing and all-encompassing phrase.

In fact, she says reassuringly, feminism is 'nothing to be frightened of'. Her book is a powerful illustration of this acceptable face of feminism — not a political belief, like socialism, not 'a shrieking harridan obsessed with destruction', but 'the most attractive and peaceful of doctrines'. So harmless and well-bred a creature is Margaret Forster's feminist that you could safely invite her to tea at the vicarage (or write flattering articles about her in *The Mail on Sunday*).

This is not to say that *Significant Sisters* is a bad book. It sets out with the admirable object of showing how women gained improvements in the choices open to them in the 100 years between 1839 and 1939. It is a timely reminder of the enormous obstacles faced by women who had the courage to embark on difficult campaigns at a time when feminism was in its infancy. Josephine Butler, one of the eight women whose life stories are told in the book, faced physical assault during her crusade against the iniquitous Contagious Diseases Acts, which allowed any woman suspected of being a prostitute to be seized and examined for venereal disease. Margaret Sanger was imprisoned for opening a family planning clinic in Brooklyn in 1916.

In this sense, the book fills a gap. It even comes close to facing the reality which Forster finally ducks. By the 1920s, she says, all was not well with feminism. Social restrictions had loosened, more women went out to work. But 'a wider, deeper ideology was needed and needed quickly before feminism floundered in a sea of complacency'. It was Emma Goldman who spotted the problem, she believes. Goldman realised women were prisoners of their own notions — even though they went out to work, they still felt obliged to do the housework.

The Economics of Feasible Socialism

Alec Nove

'Professor Alec Nove... argues powerfully, wittily and, to my mind, wholly convincingly, that Marx's idea of socialism is absurd and always has been... (the book) ought to be read by all Labour politicians and activists who still speak of Marx with vague reverence.'

Peter Kellner, New Statesman

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Allen & Unwin

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'True emancipation begins neither at the polls nor in the courts,' she wrote. 'It begins in a woman's soul.' But the crucial difference between Emma Goldman's feminism and Margaret Forster's is that the former recognised how challenging the emancipation of women would be to men.

Goldman's attempts to combine her work with her relationships with men pitched her into a series of battles with lovers who resented the changes they were expected to make in their own lives as a result of her feminism. One of them accused her of having 'no thought for anything else — your love has no thought of me or my needs. . . you are simply incapable of deep feeling. . . you will have to choose.'

Is this a response to Margaret Forster's force which is 'for the good of both men and women'? On the contrary, it is the strongest possible evidence that feminism is radical, challenging, difficult and dangerous. If feminism is disguised as a series of loosely-related campaigns to improve various aspects of women's lives, it comes with an unwritten guarantee that feminists won't rock the boat *too* much. Fortunately, the fact that they do and they will has been out of the closet for too long for Margaret Forster's genteel attempt at redefinition to force it back there. □

Possession

Bernard Crick

Property and Political Theory
ALAN RYAN *Blackwell* £15

IF EVER political theorists should earn their keep, it is by demanding that we be clear and reasonably consistent when using concepts like 'property'. Well, who are they to *demand*? But they can, by gratuitously observing how loosely we use such concepts, at least cause the kind of embarrassment that leads to some caution and some reform. Socialists are apt to leap at the idea of property, seeing its ownership as the main source of man's exploitation of man — though 'exploitation' can be a pretty technical term too, for that exploitation can sometimes result in a higher standard of living all round, but it is still exploitation if 'surplus value' is disproportionately consumed among classes. But, more simply and basically, most socialists see the private possession of property as the main source of cruelty.

Now, of course, it has to be admitted that there may be other sources of exploitation or cruelty: the dramatic lust for personal power over others, the banal anonymity of bureaucratic power; others would add sado-erotic drives. When Marx says that the bourgeois male treats his wife simply as a form of property, it is an illuminating metaphor; but *just* as a form of property? Other forms of domination may be involved, a purely economic account of sexual possession ultimately seems ludicrous. Should we rather say that there are *some* forms of property which are not purely economic? Take land, for instance. The desire of the peasant to retain his patch and of the city bourgeois to buy 'a little place' can be notoriously uneconomic. And many Labour Councils in the building boom of the 1960s never cared to ask their presumed grateful tenantry what they really wanted, perhaps because all along they knew that the answer was not the modern functional flat. Nobody, interestingly enough, talks about the selling of council flats controversy: it is houses (with a garden) people think about.

Socialists have not, on the whole, asked themselves the difficult questions. Can a person develop their full potential, be themselves at their best (i.e. young Marx, Mill, T.H. Green, Laski and Tawney) without some minimum of private property, or minimal security of possession? To some even to ask such a question is to hand in one's cards as a socialist. 'Of course, everyone should possess what they need' — a tooth-brush, some clothes, a few books, but beyond that the ground is uncertain. Private education is a bad form of property ownership/investment, but ownership of a flat, a house, a private car? Is her NHS heartpacer *hers*, part of her body, or the State's? 'Comrade, a greater need has arisen.' Don't be silly. But people do come to think that their rented public houses are theirs in a very deep sense, almost an extension of themselves. And lots of us now somehow feel that our education and training is a form of private property that we have a right to exercise irrespective of whether our particular pit is economic or even exhausted. Even the present DHSS is surprisingly tolerant in letting people register for some pretty forlorn occupational hopes.

Alan Ryan offers the important conclusion that 'property rights are nowadays important because they are *rights* rather than because they are *property* rights'. Most of the book is a brief and elegant explication of how 'property' was related to 'work', and both variously defined — in Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Bentham, Mill and Marx. The English legal tradition, Ryan observes, has been narrowly concerned with what gives a person a title to possession, but political philosophers have asked more generally, 'What is it to be the *owner* of something?' or 'How does a thing become mine?' Marx and Mill both saw human self-development as the end of society; to one property was the great obstacle, but to the other private property could be beneficial to all *if* controlled by society in the public interest — Mill turns utilitarianism against the market economy (his famous 'modified socialism').

In a final chapter, teasingly called 'Why Are There So Few Socialists?', Ryan points out that the personal possession of things is part of the good life both in socialist and in capitalist societies. The problems may be, indeed, distribution, control and use, but not ownership *per se*. Towards a property-owning socialism? Not quite, but socialist rhetoric has often offered too many hostages to fortune, appearing to attack all forms of private ownership. Political philosophers always end, correctly, by saying that the baby is not to be thrown out with the bathwater. Another excellent philosopher teeters fastidiously on the edge of drawing inferences for rethinking socialism. Come on in, Alan, plunge in, the heat is on but not unbearable. □

Fiona Pitt-Kethley

Goat show

The show was due to start at two o'clock;
one judge, white-coated, entered up some names;
a tousled Toggenburg and herd looked on.
The owner, rumpled as his goat, had two
grey upright feathers in his hat, like horns.
Some half hour late, the others came along —
large spotted Anglo-Nubians, Saanen,
blow-dried white kids, another Toggenburg.
The first, bored to malevolence, shat round.
His class was next — (a second out of two).
His bloke, disconsolate, questioned the judge
and went off scratching his short beard. The rest
stood round in groups or knelt on half-bald knees
stained by the grass. The Anglo-Nubians
posed like a nest of tables by the ropes.
I sat down on the only patch of turf
left currant-free. A chocolate kid crept up,
fresh from undoing someone's Indian skirt,
and kissed me just like Andrew Marvell's nymph's
young faun — a pleasant moment till I saw
it press its tender lips against the bold
triangularly-folded rectums of
its peers. 'She's been so good,' her mistress said.
'It's her first show.' Eight classes on, after
some small resentments, almost every goat
has a rosette — red, blue or green. Four wait
for 'Best in show', ('Reserve Best', too,
a category that's seldom found in life).
'This year,' one owner whispers gratefully,
'they didn't pick up his receding chin.'

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Shorter reviews

The Lone Conformist

ROY KERRIDGE *Chatto* £9.95

Roy Kerridge presents his credentials with pleasure. Driven underground in the Sixties, when The Rot Set In, when the world filled with form-fillers, hippies, feminists and Comprehensive Schools, and when the infidels infiltrated the social services, the theatre, the BBC and the Anglican church, Roy fretted the English perimeter until, *huzzah!*, 'a pale streak of light on the literary horizon.' It was the New Right and Roy, clutching a plastic bag, was welcomed warmly into its sherried ranks.

Anyone who sincerely believes that LSD has banjaxed the old social fabric, and that elderly clerics are the best bets about, is, to my mind, offering up some pretty wallopy cods. Very few blew their brains out on acid; and the daffy rector's not *simply* a sit-com figment. But the idyllic little niches where Roy has tucked his genially eccentric self in the meantime have, apparently, been crammed with evidence to the contrary. We'll just have to beg to differ, since he sounds so sincere. It is Kerridge's best trait. It may be cobblers, but it's honest and open about it.

And, taken with the Cerebos to hand for some quick pinches, *The Lone Conformist* is extremely funny and chocka with entertaining tales. Kicking off in '77, when an inheritance exhausts itself, Roy goes In Search Of Work, twitting his way through Life As A Lav Cleaner, through Rehabilitation at a helpless Employment Centre, a spell in a spike, and on to an invigorating flit around the 'mad religions' — Divine Light, Hare Krishna, Children of God, Scientology. He's right; they're dangerously daffy. But his cheery insistence that they're the aftermaths merely of Bad Trips is undercut by his fleeting back-pat for Jehovah's Witnesses ('much maligned — far closer to chapel Christianity than most people realise'). Indeed, he reverses frantically on this in the final pages, admitting there've *always* been loony soul-searchers.

Kerridge has an excellent ear for quirky phrases, and an eye spry for the barmier excesses of bureaucratic zeal. His disarming honesty ensures that anyone can read the book with repeated glee, and without any fear of addiction to his by now less Lonely conformity.

Bill Greenwell

Anarchism

DAVID MILLER *Dent* £10.95 & £4.95

Introductory books on anarchism tend to fall into three categories — general histories, general anthologies and general studies. David Miller's contribution to the 'Modern Ideologies' series in the Everyman University Library is a useful addition to the last category. It isn't as inclusive and elegant as George Woodcock's history (*Anarchism*) and anthology (*The Anarchist Reader*) or as incisive and eloquent as Daniel Guérin's study (*Anarchism*), but it is more accurate than the similar book by April Carter (*The Political Theory of Anarchism*) and more accessible than the other similar book by Alan Ritter (*Anarchism: A Theoretical Analysis*).

David Miller teaches social and political theory at Nuffield College, Oxford, and his approach is educational rather than either scholarly or polemical. The book is divided into three parts. The first describes the philosophical, individualist and communist varieties of anarchist theory. The second discusses anarchism as a revolutionary ideology, with chapters on human nature and history, anarchism and syndicalism, and the New Left. The third points to constructive achievements in utopian communes and revolutionary collectives, and puts some critical questions about economics, law and sociology.

Miller calls himself a 'non-anarchist' and adds that he is a 'market socialist', with sympathy for the individualist and communist strands in anarchist thought. He is generally accurate with his facts, though he copies some of the traditional errors of anarchologists. Thus, a famous quotation from 1880 about 'permanent rebellion by word, by writing, by dagger, by gun, by dynamite' is still attributed to Kropotkin rather than Cafiero, a famous pamphlet about terrorism from 1893 is left anonymous rather than attributed to Charlotte Wilson and modern terrorist groups like the Red Army Fraction and the Angry Brigade are wrongly described as anarchist. (And I am surprised to find myself included among those who favour anarchist communism and proletarian revolution.)

He is also generally sensible in his choice of material and fair in his arguments. However, he follows the usual pattern of relying on a few star figures rather than taking the general consensus of groups and periodicals; he concentrates on the extremes of economic doctrine rather than consider the middle ground of mutualism, federalism and collectivism; he confines his account of revolutionary collectives to Spain and his account of the New Left to France, which unnecessarily narrows their relevance; and he ignores the peripheral influence of anarchism on such areas as religion, education, sex and art. Perhaps one of the most attractive features of the book is that it is at the same time sympathetic to anarchism, which is good for non-anarchists, and critical of it, which is good for anarchists. Others are that it is down to earth and easy to read.

Nicolas Walter

No to Recession and Unemployment: An Examination of the Brazilian Economic Crisis

CELSO FURTADO *Third World Foundation for Social and Economic Studies* £2.95

Furtado is a famous and lucid thinker on the economics of the developing world. Administrators shaped by his views may well be prominent in the Brazilian government that takes office when the military president and his technocrats step down next March, and this best-seller on its publication late last year in Brazil distils much of the analysis they would try to apply.

It describes how the Brazilian economy, weakened by recession in its markets and by the mismanagement of the expiring regime, is being squeezed into a shape that suits only its creditors abroad and those enterprises that profit by its resources.

The author argues the necessity of Brazilians keeping the right to make their own economic decisions, and points to the goals they must aim for so as to extricate Brazil from a miasma of hard-currency debt and internal waste of investment. He uses his academic burning-glass to examine and destroy the rationale of the recession, imposed in Brazil through the International Monetary Fund and required by that country's foreign creditors and by convertible-currency governments. Also, he calls for development of the domestic market and for selectiveness in foreign trade.

This is familiar to debt-crisis hands but two special elements give this book extra grip. One is the articulate cry of 'Enough' from the receiving end in the Third World. The other is the urgent, cogent sketching of what is to be done.

Mind you, the second element leaves many details to be filled in. Furtado's condensation on the page — 'as a first step we must reach agreement on how to distribute the sacrifices we shall have to make' — does nothing to further the task of getting rich Brazilians to give up the idea that the only good tax is one other people pay.

In an introduction written in too much haste, it seems, Teresa Hayter points out that events could disappoint Furtado's optimism that Brazil can concurrently expand its economy, meet the needs of the poor and service its debts on terms (albeit much revised) foreign banks can live with. Still, as a call to resistance and to portfolios, from the GOM of an opposition that has had to wait muzzled since the generals' coup of 1964, this is an apt, dense little text for troubled times and climes.

Sue Branford's translation had tidied the Portuguese original and her appendices also help to make this work accessible to the many in over-privileged regions who should read it.

Robert del Quiaro

Art as Healing

EDWARD ADAMSON *Coventure* £6.95

When Edward Adamson arrived at Netherne mental hospital in 1946, he was handed pieces of lavatory paper on which patients had sketched with the charred end of a matchstick. Over the years, as resident art therapist, he gave those severely disturbed people the opportunity to express themselves in paint and sculpture. Some of the striking work produced under his guidance is well illustrated in *Art as Healing*.

The extraordinary liberating effect of Modernism on the art of the unprofessional painter and sculptor is evident throughout Adamson's book. Expressionism and surrealism predominate, with many naive, primitive works obviously imbued with the confidence of knowing that they will be found acceptable. Without this revolution in aesthetic appreciation, it is doubtful whether much of this sometimes gruesome and crude art would have survived the shocked disapproval of hospital orderlies, let alone been encouraged and displayed to the public as positive work.

And yet, one wonders, is this really art straight from disturbed minds? Free of all cultural restraints? Of course not. The presence of a professional artist replete with all the Modernist aesthetics of his day has undoubtedly influenced his patients strongly. They have not been encouraged to copy naturalistic illustrations, Adamson says, but to paint in a symbolic, fantastic manner. Skills are unnecessary — fantasy is supreme. And so one gets paintings full of significant objects detached from 'real life' — the nearest kind of visual communication one could get without actually forming words — madness spelled out.

Yet we know from artists who went insane before Modernism that they did not suddenly express themselves in tribal motifs but continued to view the world naturalistically — only with different obsessions. Perhaps there are many mental patients who would also like to learn skills so they might represent their view of the world more realistically. But clearly the impact of artistic fashion on visual representation goes way beyond the bounds of professional art. Nevertheless, the most important lesson of this excellently illustrated book is that the intensely satisfying process of creation is without doubt one of the finest medicines. One that should be widely encouraged not only for the ill, but for the sane as well.

Tim Newark

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FICTION

m or f?

Angela McRobbie

Tough Guys Don't Dance
NORMAN MAILER *Michael Joseph* £8.95
Amalgamemnon
CHRISTINE BROOKE ROSE *Carcanet* £7.95
Bid Me to Live
H.D. *Virago* £3.50
Out on the Plain
FRANKIE FINN *Women's Press* £7.95 & £3.50

HOW NICE it would be sometimes to let go of this thing called a feminist critique. It would make it possible, for instance, to consider Norman Mailer's **Tough Guys Don't Dance** as an expression simply of masculinity as it approaches old age. It would also allow the critic to look at the book as a good example of recent modernist thriller writing. It's spartan, bleak and absolutely without moral direction. Equally it is exciting enough. The narrative is sufficiently dense for the reader to lose her or his way and the conclusion brings with it a mild sigh of relief.

Tough Guys focuses on a failed writer, Tim Madden, who drinks himself into a stupor when his wife, a 'blonde', leaves him. He stumbles through a night which starts off with him picking up a couple in a bar and ends with him waking the next morning with a tattoo on his arm and blood on the front seat of his car. He vaguely remembers having had sex with the woman while her partner looked on from the back seat.

Later, when he is called in by the local police chief, he realises he is likely to be the main suspect in the hunt for the killer. Still unsure as to what has really happened, he uncovers her severed head, along with that of his departed wife, buried in his illicit marijuana allotment.

Like most well written thrillers, *Tough Guys* possesses a minimalist metaphysics. In terms of genre, it is stripped bare. If there is no innocence, neither is there any concrete guilt. There is not a man in the book who is not guilty in some capacity towards these women. Mailer takes care to emphasise the point. Both Madden and the policeman enjoy decapitating nude photographs of their wives and girlfriends. And perhaps the reason I find it so difficult to surrender, even temporarily, my feminist anger, is that Mailer makes it plain in his fiction and his documentary writing, as well as in interviews, that this 'individual' violence is widespread, in some ways normal, and otherwise a kind of safety valve against wider social aggression.

Presumably in this latter case he is referring to that violence where men turn against themselves, rather than directing their 'healthier' aggro towards women.

Interesting aside: it is Madden's (oedipal?) father whose boast gives the book its title. Not only does the man in question refrain from taking to the dance floor, he also restrains himself, it seems, when it comes to kissing, despite a lifetime of sexual prowess. He was 'never obliged to kiss a girl . . . Whose joint did she cop last night?'

CHRISTINE BROOKE ROSE'S **Amalgamemnon** emerges from a very different literary camp. It is certainly a great deal more genteel, a variant of that focus within post-structuralism designed to produce a kind of 'writing-from-within-the-woman's-body'.

This is a form currently favoured by many French feminists. But in this case it lacks the fluidity and certainly the sexual ambiguity of, say, Helene Cixous. It may also be a peculiarly French mode. In *Amalgamemnon* the character's consciousness dissolves into the range of other 'noises' which surround her. The radio which keeps her awake at night, her academic lover taking up her time and energy and chiding her for not adhering to the principles of deconstruction in their lovers' play with language. And then, also, her own academic voice, one trained in the classics and now allowed no channel for its expression. Irony enters the book when the narrator, threatened with redundancy, plans to strike a blow against high theory by going into pig-farming. But the whole thing is written rather formulaically as though to impress a hypothetical readership seated round a Cambridge dinner party.

Bid Me to Live is a great deal more interesting because it offers the reader gossip about a subject (in this case, a fictionalised version of D. H. Lawrence) rather than the demise of The Subject. Alternatively one could say that, as a novel, it was written with precisely this aim in mind.

Julia Ashton, its fragile heroine, is drawn earlier in her life to a famous poet (Ezra Pound) who admires her poetry and, later, to Rico (D. H. Lawrence) who flirts with her but goes no further. H. D. was in fact a founder member of the Imagiste movement in poetry which grew up in 1912 and went on to become a broader literary grouping, the so-called 'other Bloomsbury', with Amy Lowell as well as Lawrence and his wife Frieda at its centre. Julia here is a shadowy figure, dependent and a little precious. She tries hard to live according to the mores of the new sexuality and encourages her husband to bring both his new lover and her mother to stay. She suffers when D. H. Lawrence/Rico charms her and more or less abandons her. Eventually she retreats to Cornwall with a new companion and begins to find greater tranquillity and confidence.

Frankie Finn writes in her introduction to **Out on the Plain** of her involvement in a women's writing group and this very much sets the terms for the book. It's a reflective novel which brings four women together 'on the plain', a space between where the author writes, a houseboat on the Thames, and the real world.

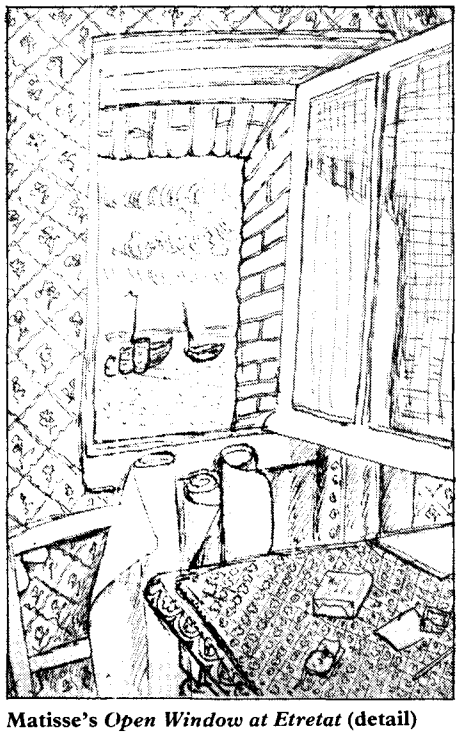
Ultimately, it's an attempt to forge an explicitly feminist imagery. The strange thing is that as soon as something so concrete is created in writing, the stronger is my own urge to resist it. Looking for the Real Woman in You drives me almost to looking for man in myself. If Mailer idealises his own sex, the feminist orthodoxy moves towards a similar trap. □

ART

Eviction

John Spurling

The Drawings and Sculpture of Henri Matisse
Hayward
Contemporary Art Society Market
Five Dials Gallery, 33 Shelton Street, London WC2
What's New
Library Gallery, Ramsgate, until 3 November, then Huddersfield, Darlington, Wolverhampton, Barnsley, Walsall and Worcester.
Julian Cooper
Paton Gallery, 2 Langley Court, London WC2, until 27 October



Matisse's *Open Window at Etretat* (detail)

IT IS HARD to feel sympathy for the landlord in the Hayward affair. The GLC has not presented any but vague rhetorical reasons for evicting the Arts Council at six months' notice, while the Arts Council can point to an extraordinarily varied and successful list of 129 exhibitions mounted since the gallery's opening with a show of Matisse paintings in 1968.

Ancient and modern, contemporary and ethnic, photographic and architectural, international and local, the list covers a much greater range of art than any other gallery in this country has ever attempted. The Arts Council's statement claims that its programme at the Hayward 'has helped to establish London as an international centre for art exhibitions in the same league as Paris and New York'. I would go further and suggest that the Hayward has been the leading factor in making London as central to the world's artistic life during the last 15 years as it already was to the musical and dramatic.

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Of course, only a few months ago the Arts Council's officers and well-wishers had to wheel out the identical arguments to defend the Hayward against its own Chairman. Sir William Rees-Mogg never, so far as I know, made any public apology for trying to get rid of the Hayward by stealth in 1982 and his official remarks now about the GLC's action being 'unconscionable and irresponsible' sound peculiarly hypocritical. It seems doubtful whether the GLC would have gone in for this latest piece of self-advertisement if Rees-Mogg had not given them the idea. His Council should have asked him to resign then and it is not too late for them to do so now.

Meanwhile, in this Gilbertian situation, the Arts Council presumably hopes — standing on a tenancy agreement which Rees-Mogg says 'implicitly recognises the impracticality of disrupting a planned exhibition programme at less than eighteen months' notice' — to stave off the GLC until it has been abolished, so we may never know what Peter Pitt really had in store

. . .and *Self-portrait* (1937)

for us and why he felt that his popular foyer exhibitions in the Festival Hall were inadequate. But, before the dust settles, the Arts Council should consider whether the Hayward might not acquire a stronger identity and become better able to withstand similar alarms in the future by directing more attention to its second role, as the base for its own valuable and substantial collection of British post-war art. If a section of the gallery — say the top floor — were permanently set aside for this collection — that part of it not out on loan or tour — the public might both appreciate better the quality and diversity of our contemporary artists and see the Hayward as more of a real place, an institution with a continuous life of its own instead of just a temporary exhibition space.

Who knows but that revealing the Arts Council's collection over the years might even bring about a revolution in domestic taste? People might be encouraged to patronise living artists. Very few of the works bought in the last five years (they are listed with small illustrations of each in the newly published *Arts Council Collection Acquisitions 1979-83*, £7) are by household names and most are unpretentious, inexpensive and domestic in scale, with almost every conceivable style represented. The Hayward could become an indispensable shop-window for a British product whose existence, let alone excellence, hardly anyone seems to suspect.

A pipe-dream, perhaps, but at least we don't have to wait for a revived Hayward to begin the process. In five days' time, on 24 October, the Contemporary Art Society, whose main activity is buying work to present to public art galleries, is opening a four-day market at the Five Dials Gallery, Covent Garden. The 300 or so works by living artists, known, partly known and unknown, will be priced between £50 and £500 and sold straight off the walls to the first comer. If £500 sounds a large sum, consider how many such sums go to make the average yearly wage and therefore how many objects the artist would have to make and sell in a year to match it. We tend to take it for granted that artists should earn their living either by pretending to be unemployed or by practising anything other than their trade.

Julian Cooper's 'Bella Vista Hotel' — based on his obsession with Lowry's novel *Under the Volcano* — was one of the outstanding Arts Council purchases last year. It is currently on view at the Ramsgate Library Gallery in a touring exhibition called **What's New**? which includes 42 new works from the collection. Since I was one of the six purchasers who acquired them (three from the Arts Council's staff and three outsiders), I can't review the show, but I can point out that there are several paintings and drawings by Cooper at the Paton Gallery in London. The largest canvas, measuring 7 feet by 8, is another ambitious and remarkable response to *Under the Volcano* — a version of the last section of the novel called 'The Farolito' which, like 'Bella Vista Hotel', dares to take on the Old Masters of figure painting at their own technique and to suggest in a single shot a whole slice of the action. Cooper has a playwright's or novelist's eye for characters and relationships, but a painter's eye for light and two-dimensional structure. History painting has long been discredited, but I believe Cooper could make it work again, especially if he tackled contemporary history.

The Arts Council's 129th contribution to its impressive record at the Hayward is a magnificent double exhibition of all Matisse's sculpture and a large selection of his drawings. Matisse, who portrayed himself as a repressed voyeur — almost the archetypal man in the dirty mackintosh — but sculpted and drew the female body with no repressions at all, stands for everything that political populists most dislike about art: its refined skill, its sensuality, its witty unpredictability, its direct and personal relationship with visible life (regardless of social responsibility or municipal notions of what constitutes public enjoyment). 'The importance of an artist,' he said, 'is to be measured by the number of signs he has introduced into the language of art,' and, although he is principally admired for his colours, it is in these lines and solids that he can be seen most clearly experimenting with the traditional language and evolving his unique signs. Of course the importance of an artist is also to be measured by the amount of pleasure he or she gives and, whether or not Matisse's attendance figures further strengthen the Arts Council's case, that is not a simple question of how many people pass in and out of the doors. □

THEATRE

Standing together

Benedict Nightingale

Six Men of Dorset
MILES MALLESON & HARRY BROOKS *Shaw*

NOTHING HAS caused me greater amazement since my return to this column after a year away than the news that 7:84 may well no longer be on my theatrical visiting list just a few months from now. Next April it's to be rudely yanked off the financial life-support system that, as I know from personal experience, the Arts Council once regarded it as a privilege to be able to provide for the company.

I can remember its name coming up again and again at the Drama Panel when this or that crusading tribe presented itself for assessment. 'Very interesting,' people would say of Clenched Fist or Blood-Stained Banner or whatever, 'but not quite 7:84, don't you agree?' Or, more positively: 'Quite promising — maybe one day we'll be able to mention it in the same breath as 7:84.' The company was what we kept in our mental pockets, ready to be whipped out and used to measure the quality of others; it was also, of course, clinching counter-evidence whenever anyone attacked the Council for funding combative or proselytising work. Yes, politically radical aims and high artistic standards could be reconciled. 7:84 proved it.

It and its Scots sister-group proved it in theatres and draughty church-halls and working men's clubs and works canteens, with *Fish in the Sea* and *Little Red Hen* and *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil* and much else; and now here it is in London, barely a mile from its executioner's palace on Piccadilly, defying the rope and the guillotine, the Ritner and the killer-Mogg, by proving it yet again. *Six Men of Dorset* may not be the most remarkable script it's performed — though luminous enough, God knows, by the generally drear standards of its theatrical period, circa 1934 — but it successfully demonstrates not just that 7:84's special strengths are still intact, but that it's one of the few companies of any kind to merit that vogue-word, ensemble.

How many others can compete with the sober passion of its realism — that fluency, that energy, that discipline, that self-evident warmth of heart and rigour of mind? In a theatrical field where, let's admit, one often finds mere railing and flailing, hectoring and hullaballoo, 7:84 seems refreshingly measured and sane. Maybe that's why it has to go.

The 'six men' are, of course, the Tolpuddle martyrs, an estimably measured and sane lot

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themselves. We see them arguing the case against systematic starvation with restraint and decorum, then being cynically robbed of the higher wages they've been promised, then quietly forming themselves into a union lodge staid enough to end its meetings with a ringing 'God save the King!'. Their error, the chink in their yeomanly armour, was to take an oath of secrecy, the sort long winked at when similarly administered by freemasons and Orangemen. That allowed a fearful government to disinter an Act of Parliament intended to curb conspiracy in the armed forces. The rest of the story everyone must surely know, since it's one of the reasons we've a vote and, in spite of everything, the right to belong to a union.

The play tells its plain tale plainly, rejecting the temptation to guy the governing classes and, less happily, the opportunity to anatomise their serfs in any depth. How do people think and feel when they have to decide between continuing to tolerate the barely tolerable and mounting a protest that could well end by making their lives absolutely intolerable? What's it like simultaneously to try to be loyal to God, monarch, economic system, local hierarchy, wives and children, one's own class, one's comrades and oneself? It would be nice if the authors of *Dorset* had speculated a little further about the doubts, the caveats, the internal evolution of their exemplary heroes; nice, and more than nice, because the questions they embody are still with us. There was plenty of knowing laughter from the audience when Lord Melbourne declared that it would be 'a little extreme perhaps for 1832' to confiscate union funds, or opined that 'it would be better that the law was seen to be above politics, simply taking its impartial course'. But one can imagine a richer, more intricate play, one that asked us to recognise aspects not only of our own society but of our own selves, still beset by similar contradictions and confusions.

All the same, the documentary evidence vividly and unpretentiously assembled by *Dorset* is quite sufficient to justify the shamelessly robust and rousing chorus with which the evening ends: 'unity must never die, raise your banners high!' And let me ask this. Has not that cry as much right as any to be heard in our subsidised theatre, provided it's put across by performers who meet the prevailing standards of excellence, as no one can tell me 7:84 doesn't? We've been hearing a lot these last days, and with reason, about the awfulness of trying to stifle free speech and democratic intercourse. Shouldn't the Arts Council ask itself if it isn't making its own small contribution to that same foul conspiracy. □

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FILMS

Hit or miss

John Coleman

Kim Basinger being *Natural*

The Natural (PG)
Odeon, Leicester Square; etc.
Where the Green Ants Dream (15)
Chelsea Cinema

IT TOOK just over a decade for Bernard Malamud's first novel, published in America in 1952, to turn up over here. Presumably with a weathered eye on this novelist's subsequent output, 1963 saw Eyre & Spottiswoode risking the odd dog, or mongrel, of a book and Penguin picked it up four years later. Always a strange occasion, **The Natural** has finally been converted into a film of sorts, all sorts, with a more up-beat screenplay from Roger Towne and Phil Dusenberry, Barry Levinson — who made such a cracking debut with *Diner* — as director, and the beautiful nice-guy Robert Redford in the lead.

It is round and about baseball, corruption, heroes and what the looser-tongued among us might term Fate. The novel had some of the dimensions of parable. Young Roy Hobbs (Redford playing 20 via some discreet camerawork and/or lighting) is the 'natural', a kid entrained for his shot at the big time, with a drunken manager and a bat he whittled out of a tree split by lightning when he was a rural kid. On that Chicago-bound train, Roy notes and is subsequently gunned in the gut by a crazy, veiled Delilah, whose habit it is to put a silver bullet into athletes; this in an hotel room, whither she has lured the hick.

This is the book's prologue, though withheld as knowledge till a shade further on in the film. By which time, some 15 years have elapsed and our Roy, a more openly-lit Mr Redford, belatedly starts to break into the big time, becoming top batter for a New York team, the Knights, on the skids until he and his bat, named 'Wonderboy', commence hitting the balls pitched by the opposition high into the bleachers; and, in the movie, rather too accurately for credibility, at a sleazy sports journalist Max (Robert Duvall), a stadium clock and — in a slambang finale — powerfully enough to knock to blazes the serried light-bulbs illuminating a night game and so allowing of a slow-motion triumphal caper round the field and the kind of golden-shower pyrotechnics clearly relished by a cameraman.

Part of the trouble with Malamud's early novel (which was elsewhere strong and sinewy on the sporting side, the *feel* of the thuds, hits and muscularity of athletes in action) was the space it left for uncertainty about his intentions. You have this fellow Roy, coming — as it were — out of nowhere, in his mid-thirties, to make a huge, magical mark as a star and also to encounter yet another fateful blonde, the manager's niece Memo (pretty Kim Basinger on screen); her big-bookie bloke Gus; a sinister part-owner of the resurgent club, known as the Judge and favouring shuttered rooms — shades of the Arnold Rothstein scandal? This trio, part-aided by Duvall's dig-the-dirt Max, are there to cajole, bribe and generally jinx the late-come hero towards an unbought disgrace, which the book accords him.

The film, of course, does no such thing, building up the momentarily good-luck and loving presence of a woman called Iris (Glenn Close) into an aureoled and inspiring ex-girlfriend, from Roy's down-on-the-farm youth, awarding him her (and a son) in maybe a dream finale. The script has further, early on, inserted mythic words into the mouth of the silver-bullet murderess, when young Roy has earned her dangerous admiration during a train-halt and a strong-arm moment at a funfair: 'It was just like watching Sir Lancelot . . .' This is confounding. The suggestible could easily start equating 'Wonderboy' with Excalibur or some such. But, in fairness to what has become a converted vehicle for Robert Redford to hit box-office home-runs, sufficient confusion reigns in the Malamud original to let all manner of interpretative lunacies leak in: it is available to grandiose speculation. *Any* fiction that has the muddling gall to name a bad girl 'Memo' is somewhat asking for it. But I still prefer the book, even if its purposes leave much of it closed to me. Mr Levinson's *The Natural* is just hit-and-run.

Werner Herzog's **Where the Green Ants Dream** is set — some might say, beset — in Australia, where he has rejigged anthropology to suit his own brand of mysticism or madness and rightly enraged bureaucratic folk out there closer to the plight of the Aborigines than he is. With its sweeping shots of ant-hilled wastes, orange deserts sprouting white cones, it fair takes the breath away visually as Herzog's weird films have a critically benumbing habit of doing. This is the itinerant German's first film mostly in English, or Oz, with a few excursions into the tongues of a depleted people. A mining company, drilling for uranium, is held up by a tribe's irritating habit of simply squatting down in front of bulldozers, looking seamily wise, and playing that abominable instrument, the didgeridoo Some of this is quite comical,

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notably a sit-down in a supermarket over a once ancestral site. But Mr Herzog has no right to use his Aborigines, whose presumed dignity he trades on, by planting on them a false superstition centring on dreaming green ants. 'Why the fuck,' as an irate mine-foreman explodes, 'can't they dream somewhere else?' One might ask as much of the director. □

Among this week's contributors:

BERNARD CRICK's publications include *Political Theory and Practice* and, most recently, *George Orwell: a Life.*

DAVID EDGAR is a playwright. His *Maydays* was performed by the RSC at the Barbican last year.

MERVYN JONES's novel *Joanna's Luck* will be published by Piatkus next month.

NAOMI MITCHISON's autobiographical writings include *Small Talk*, *All Change Here* and *You May Well Ask*.

JAZZ

No sweat

Charles Fox

United Jazz + Rock Ensemble
Bloomsbury Theatre

THE NAME BRISTLES like an agit-prop slogan chalked on a wall, brandishing solidarity, implying a manifesto, exhorting the uncommitted to rally to the aesthetic equivalent of a Popular Front. Reality is neither so ideological nor so romantic. The United Jazz + Rock Ensemble came into existence in 1975 simply because a Stuttgart TV station needed a band capable of tackling both sorts of music. From such a mundane beginning has sprung this ten-piece group which tours twice-yearly (oddly enough, the current perambulation around the Arts Council's Contemporary Music Network marks the band's first appearance in Britain) and goes in for at least an annual change of repertoire.

Fusion of the kind emblazoned in that title is not especially new. Ever since jazz took on an identity, three-quarters of a century ago, it has kept up a liaison with whatever was pulling in the punters. It used to be the tunes that got appropriated, becoming those standards — 'Body and soul', 'I got rhythm', 'What is this thing called love?' — that improvisers took for their raw material. Borrowings from rock have mostly involved rhythmic techniques — drum patterns, bass guitar lines — and a range of electronic accessories.

Miles Davis moved in quite early. So did Weather Report. At least two of the British members of the UJ+RE cultivated the overlap: the drummer Jon Hiseman with Colosseum and, still leading his group Nucleus, trumpeter Ian Carr. Equally active have been three of the Germans: the Ensemble's nominal leader, Wolfgang Dauner (he stuck to a conventional, acoustic piano throughout the London concert); Eberhard Weber, whose bodyless electric bass looks like a precocious balalaika; and Volker Kriegel, who in a pre-concert discussion claimed to be just a straightforward

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Theatre

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PAX
by Deborah Levy
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Events

SHAW SOCIETY presents Ronald Taylor, editor of the Elgar Society Journal on: 'Extremes meet Sometimes' Elgar and Shaw. Joint meeting of Elgar and Shaw Societies. Friday 26 Oct. Coffee 6.30 pm, lecture 7 pm. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London WC1.

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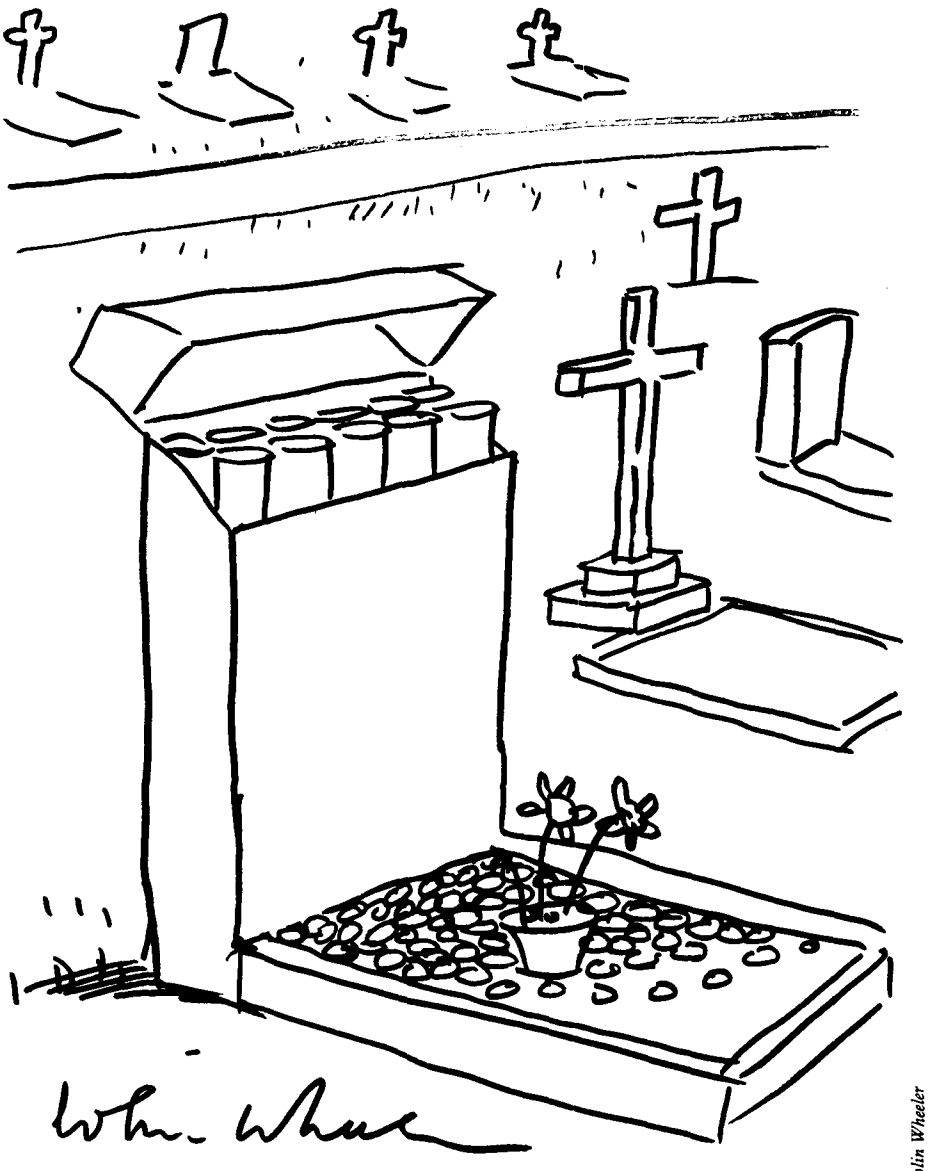
amplified guitarist but on-stage used more gadgets than Charlie Christian ever even dreamed of.

Hiseman's clean-cut precision and Weber's springy lines were to the fore from the start of 'Garberville', the concert's opening number, a sort of elongated fanfare. Yet equally typical of the evening was the sonority of the scoring — often bracing, always intricate, a subtlety that went beyond the needs of rock, even assuming timbres not often encountered in jazz. Instead of, say, the ecstatic yelp of Woody Herman's brass section or the bizzareries of Duke Ellington's, the three trumpets and one trombone of the UJ+RE seemed to veer closer to the baroque brass tradition, a case, maybe, of Europeans cherishing their past. What was missing was the sweatiness of rock, its physical ambience. The light drum tattoos beneath the opening choruses of Barbara Thompson's composition *'Die Wiederkehr* (The Returned)' showed how that idiom could be abstracted and recast in more formal terms. Which is not to deny that the concert contained many passages when the rhythmic strategy ruled.

Democracy often consorts uneasily with aesthetic demands. In a band such as this, where every member is both a composer and leader in his or her own right, there is a careful parcelling out of tunes and solos — and even of announcements at the microphone. So admirers of the trombonist Albert Mangelsdorff had to be content with just a couple of samples of his virtuosity. It was, incidentally, surprising to discover that Mangelsdorff composed the band's two flag-wavers, 'Rip off' and, giving plenty of elbow room to the drummer, the bilingually titled *'Ganz schon heiss*, man (It's very hot, man)'.

Just as tantalising was Barbara Thompson's solitary outing on soprano saxophone in 'The Return'. Ack van Rooyen played his trumpet fleetly in 'Rip off' (he even blew toe-to-toe with Kenny Wheeler) and introspectively in Eberhard Weber's clinging piece, 'Sometime in Silence'. The American in the band, Charlie Mariano, launched his alto saxophone above hymn-like chords in his own composition, 'Randy', but contrived to be more emotive in Wolfgang Dauner's *'Wendekreis des Steinbocks* (Tropic of Capricorn)', notable not only for Dauner's piano playing but the way the composition pursued the European connection to that opposite fusion, the confluence of jazz methods and classical forms, sometimes called Third Stream.

Readers in the north can still catch the UJ+RE — in York this Friday, Sheffield on Saturday, Kendall (as part of the Jazz Festival) on Sunday, and rounding off the tour at Newcastle next Tuesday. A little perseverance — and access to a specialist jazz record shop — should unearth *United Live Opus Sechs* (Mood 28.642), an LP recorded just over three months ago. It contains six of the pieces performed at the Bloomsbury Theatre, but with the trumpeter Johannes Faber taking Kenny Wheeler's place. Repeated hearings heighten the impact of the elaborate scoring, while 'Lady Bountiful', composed by Ian Carr and featuring his own trumpet and the guitar playing of Volker Kriegel, comes across as perhaps the most authentic proof of the band living up to its name. □



Colin Wheeler

Fag ends

David Edgar

WHEN I VOLUNTEERED this topic for a column, I thought it would be kinda cute to run it on or about 28 September, that being the actual date, so to speak, but the Literary Editor advised me against such a course. She herself cannot speak with full authority on this matter, having never (on her own admission) really done it properly at all. But I nonetheless took her point that to go for the precise semester would be tempting fate beyond endurance. Because unlike the Literary Editor I *had* done it properly, and then some, for over half my life-time, and even after six months there are still odd moments when I want one more than almost anything else in the world.

But to that tiny proportion of the petit-bourgeois intelligentsia still indulging, can I hastily underline the word 'want'? Because, hugely to my surprise, as a 40-plus-a-day person and one, furthermore, who had not for 20 years managed to go for more than six waking hours in health without one (defining 'in health' as a condition in which it was just about possible to inhale without the smoke going down meeting breakfast coming up), I have not *needed* one since I ground the last one out under my heel outside the acupuncturist's at precisely 11.32 a.m. on 28 March 1984. And, happily, as a creature of many appetites, I am more than used to coping with wants which duty, practicality, convention or good taste prevent me from satisfying, at the time or ever, and, while the increasingly occasional desire to light up remains a 'want' in that sense, the ashtrays can remain beneath the sink.

For the remaining band of brothers and sisters, however, it is a kind of duty to pass on certain truths which friends, doctors and less scrupulous exes may deny, thus leading to despair and the danger of recidivism. As mentioned, the secret in my case was the little pins in the ears, twiddled to reduce (in my case, eliminate) the craving. But whether you go for acupuncture, hypnotism or will-power, what

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you are confronting thereby *is* the craving, not the various side-effects to which you had better know you will fall victim.

First of all, having taken this awesome step for the sake of your lungs, the ungrateful things will proceed to cough and splutter on as if nothing had happened (if not worse) for weeks if not months. Second, having also had in mind that the various vague headaches, concentration lapses, mild amnesias to which middle-aged flesh is heir must have *something* to do with all that shit you're breathing in, it's galling to find that a good month passes before you are able to construct a simple sentence, particularly on the telephone, and that is not to mention those occasional flashes of intemperance which require such patient understanding if you're both giving up at the same time. But third, and worst of all, surely no one contemplates this madness without believing that they'll somehow end up looking healthier, happier and more attractive, free at last from the stained fingers, the bulging pockets and the unsightly films of ash. And although it will be denied by all, take it from me that unless you have the metabolism of a whippet, you will put on weight, *whether or not* you turn (as I did) to peppermints, cup-cakes and British Rail fruit pies for succour and comfort.

And it is only, in my view, having confronted those dangers and difficulties, that the putative abstainer should begin to consider the blessings. (It is in fact quite useful not only to consider them, but to affix written lists to the telephone, the percolator and the dashboard of the car.) Small things, like being able for the first time in adulthood to move from room to room, at fancy or whim, without wondering whether they are safely pocketed, or near to running out. Larger matters, like realising the number of pleasures which you hadn't experienced in their own right for years, but merely as preludes to hitting the back of the lung with inhalations of burning tar (like food, obviously, but also being outside, or inside non-smoking environments like the theatre, and, sure, the other thing). But best of all, the extraordinary change that occurs in the self-image of a person who has never bothered confronting any indulgence, on the grounds that if you're too much of a wimp to lick a habit that you know is killing you, what chance do you have against the milder evils of caffeine, spirituous liquors or an excess of dead animal?

For indeed it is meeting the New Me that is the greatest of all pleasures, and the New You, oh last gaspers, on whom your sights should be set. True, there is rather more of him or her than there was of the old one, and they lumber a little round the tennis court — but then again, before, they couldn't have survived the knock-up without running out of breath. And although they still sit around a lot, often with glass in hand, they have (they remember) three grandparents who survived the age of 80: they're confronted with the not unattractive notion that they, too, might have an old age before them. But best of all is the consciousness of a new energy not physical so much as moral. Because, I can tell you, no one who has been through what I have been through in the last six months is going to allow Messrs Reagan and Chernenko to succeed where Messrs Benson and Hedges so signally failed. □

TELEVISION

Hugo Williams

Fisticuffs

'HELLO, I'm Derek Malcolm and I'm the film critic of the *Guardian*,' said a bespectacled character introducing a show called **Robert Mitchum** (C4). Here was the archetypal autograph hunter momentarily elevated to Christian name terms with his hero. And Mitchum didn't let him down. He didn't look at Malcolm once and boasted throughout with true macho grit. I was longing for Malcolm to put up his dooks and have a go at this barrel-chested horse-slugger, but it wasn't any use. He was in love. 'It's really great to have you here tonight, Bob . . .'

Bob's best film was *Macao* by Josef von Sternberg, but Mitchum was unimpressed by this wimp, who'd gone to Europe as a famous American director and come back as a famous European director. 'I said to him, where'd ya get that accent, Jo. You're from Noo Jersey.' Collapse of famous European director. 'When *Macao* was finished there was no way they could glue it together. I kept meeting myself.'

A director with an eye-patch like Raoul Walsh was much more up Bob's manly street. Walsh was so cool he didn't watch a scene, he just tore out the page. He'd turn his back and roll up a cigarette with one hand. But he did it on his blind side, so he didn't notice all the tobacco falling out. He'd light the empty paper and it'd flare up and burn all his hair the way it should if a real man is directing a movie.

Bob himself was busted for a puff of weed at a strategic moment in his career as a hell raiser and the rap — revoked later by a film-fan judge — boosted him to megastar. Film fan Malcolm was dying to display his liberal leanings in this area, so he leant towards Bob and said he believed quite a few stars did quite a few different drugs like cocaine and some other drug in Hollywood these days, did Bob 'do' cocaine or anything? Bob looked over at Malcolm, as if for the first time, and said, 'Do I do WHAT?' The sequence had to be excised from the TV version of the 'lecture', leaving the rest of it bruised and touchy looking.

Another man with an eye-patch who really respected Bob but didn't take drugs was John Wayne, **Hollywood Greats** (BBC-1).Wayne's taller and butcher than Mitchum, with a better figure, but according to Mitchum he used to wear lifts in his shoes, just like Bob. Bob asked him about this once, man to man. 'Gerta keep 'em Wayne-conscious, Bob,' said the Dook.

Another well-known brawler, Grace Jones, disco-model and Conan the Barbarian's floozy, was in town for a return bout with old adversary Russell Harty. She turned up instead as sparring partner to **Terry Wogan** (BBC-1). Grace looked about to nut the Irishman with her roof-top hairstyle, but Wogan the Barbarian got under her guard with some of his pause-ridden blarney and reduced the bronze icon to

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flesh and blood, almost. I saw her at a party last week wearing inflatable jodhpurs. Two admirers were blowing them up for her.

Even without her jodhpurs Grace was at least twice the size of Wogan's previous guest, bruiser Norman Mailer, who had sensibly become specially small and mouselike for the occasion. Mailer has been matched with some rough women in his time, but I wouldn't give him two rounds in the ring with Grace. In fact Mailer was over here for a re-match with old opponent Germaine Greer on Anthony Howard's **Face the Press** (C4). Principal troubleshooter was the kid-gloved Christopher Hitchens, who launched the team's main assault on Mailer's homosexual preoccupations, thinly disguised as much-married machismo, they thought. In his new book, as in his old books, Mailer is hung up on arm-wrestling. Was it supposed to be ironical this time, or did he approve of the bullyboy hero? Approve? That was for mediocre writers: 'You can't write a decent style unless you're going to carry a few ironies.' Greer: 'I'm relieved to discover you see it with some irony.' Mailer: 'I'm dashed to discover you have to discover it.'

Did he approve of Reagan's challenge to arm-wrestle Walter Mondale? 'Oh no,' said Mailer, doing the Ali-shuffle, 'Walt has the kind of stolid outlook that's just right for arm-wrestling.' The few times Mailer had been near violence himself he'd noticed the curious slow-down effect. This was a frontier for writing, he thought. At this, The Hitch returned with a four-point combination: prisons, impotence, group sex, homosexuality. Could Mailer honestly deny an obsession with homoeroticism here? Was he queer at all? Another shuffle and Mailer whipped out Tennessee Williams to take the punches. After all, Williams, a longtime gay, had written some fine parts for women, so why shouldn't . . . 'Ah, but the great event in the book is an erection,' said Greer, 'it's quite preposterous.' Mailer shed his gum-shield at this and tried to claim he'd written the book in a bit of a rush, as usual. 'I said to myself that I was going to indulge myself,' he said. Greer: 'That's what I thought you'd said to yourself.'

One other knock-out this week. The moment in **The Oldest Rebel — The Life and Times of Lord Shinwell** (C4) when Shinwell brought down newcomer Neil Kinnock with a well-timed blow to the teeth (Kinnock was smiling at the time): 'Let me give you a piece of advice,' said Kinnock's centenarian colleague, 'don't smile so much'.

Easily the best thing on TV this week was **Broken Blossoms** (C4) an old silent with Lillian Gish almost as good as in her earlier *The Wind*. 'I don't care for modern films,' says Gish, 'cars crashing over cliffs and close-ups of people's feet.' She came on to introduce this classic, still looking middle-aged thanks to facial exercises. 'I had a temperature of 106 when I made this film,' she said. 'So when we rehearsed the scene in the cupboard I decided to conserve my energy. When we shot it Griffith said to me, "Why didn't you tell me you were going to do that?"' The scene in question has Gish turning round and round like a trapped rat as her father breaks down the door with an axe, a scene reminiscent of one in *The Shining*. □

Naseem Khan
Inside out

THERE is, you must admit, a certain irony in it. Kirklees Arts Council set up a conference on ethnic arts, calling it trenchantly 'The Arts Britain *Still* Ignores'. Alas, they were forced to cancel it. Why? Not enough response.

One might think this perfectly proved Kirklees's case without putting them to all the trouble and expense of actually running a conference. Not unnaturally, Kirklees does not take this view. The KAC has hired the Social Arts Trust to find out exactly why their conference fell as flat as a pancake.

Coincidentally, another event — or lapse — occurred. Once a year the Minority Rights Group, together with MAAS (Minorities Arts Advisory Service), presents a series of awards for ethnic arts. They are the only awards of their kind, are relatively prestigious and, being far-sighted enough to have started before the great fad for ethnic arts, have some track record. Press reaction? Nil.

Take these two stories together and you might reasonably conclude that the so-called ethnic arts of Britain are a small voice crying in the wilderness, with no takers to press their cause.

In fact, very much the opposite would appear to be the case. At the local level, most regional arts associations now have officers with special responsibility, at the least, for ethnic arts, and some go very much further in positive encouragement. Centrally the Arts Council has declared them an area of priority. Channel Four has, for the first time, screened them relatively consistently. Above all, there is the GLC with its sterling support: a special Minorities Unit, a special sub-committee, a million pounds and, most importantly, the statement implicit in all this that these are arts that matter. Compared with the situation in 1976 when the report for which I was responsible (to make my interest plain), 'The Arts Britain Ignores', came out, the change in official thinking is staggering. However, it can be argued that it is not all it seems, that everything in the garden is not lovely and that my opening stories are symptoms of that malaise.

Looking back seven years is no act of indulgence. It can illuminate some of the changes that have taken place. Seven years ago there was no such thing as ethnic arts, not because the work didn't exist but because there was no such generally recognised concept. Writing to local authorities to elicit information brought the reply again and again, 'We have got nothing like that here,' which often turned out to be patently untrue. Naming categories is a powerful act. Like a baptism, it brings an individual into the social body. In this case, it has resulted in the development of a whole branch of the arts committees. They don't belong, mind you, to the main arts funding mechanism. They belong in a kind of sub-section of loonies: women, disableds and ethnic arts.

Establishing the category, looking back, has actually been remarkably easy. Partly that's been because the arts have been regarded as no threat: colourful, exciting, comprehensible, they have been seen as the acceptable face of immigration. But it also has had deleterious effects and though originally perceived as a short-term category, a stepping stone no more, shows no signs of fading away. Firstly, by making a special case of ethnic arts, the GLC in particular has paradoxically succeeded in painting them into a corner where they have only each other to contend with for grants that, by the basic laws of life, are never large enough. It is not a healthy situation. The bureaucratic separation of arts and ethnic arts means, in addition, that there is little cross-fertilisation, or education of the mainstream. It was significant at the recent public meetings for a national arts lobby, for instance, that there were speakers on all sorts of art forms — and one for the ethnic arts. Thirdly, the position of an adjunct in arts funding is neither comfortable nor desirable; a special case under one administration can all too easily become an unspecial one under another. If there is moreover little informed support for them in the mainstream, then it is even easier.

THE ADDITIONAL irony of this situation is that, despite the increased official patronage, neither the quality nor quantity of ethnic arts appears to have significantly changed. Linton Kwesi Johnson, when he presented the MRG awards, spoke of black theatre in particular as having come into its own. But in fact there was probably as much black theatre activity in the Seventies — from the excellent Keskidee theatre company under Rufus Collins to young agitprop groups — as there is now.

Why should this be? Is it because we immigrants and second generations are dumb and lacking in initiative and don't know a good thing when we see it? Surely not.

What I suspect it comes down to is access to power. Where in the arts funding structures are the black arts and leisure directors? Only one black regional arts officer is employed in a general arts area (as opposed to 'ethnic arts') in the country at large. Where are the theatre managers and publishers, producers, entrepreneurs that enabled, for instance, Jewish immigrants to find their way into the mainstream entertainment industry? Without that sort of infrastructure, it is unrealistic to expect ethnic arts to flower.

Indeed, given the present situation, it is worse than unrealistic. When a section of society meets discrimination that ranges from physical violence to a higher per capita rate of unemployment the invitation to be creative can be seen as insulting. At its worst, it's, 'We won't give you a job, but here's a few thousand to go off and start a breakdancing group.'

Given an isolated and powerless situation, in which bureaucracy has marginalised ethnic arts even further, it is surely little wonder that so few people travelled up to Kirklees to debate them. □

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Weekend competition

No 2844 Set by Nina Watkins

A recently advertised book (whose contents, not having read them, I'm in no position to judge) was somewhat startlingly entitled *Jane Austen and the French Revolution*. The promotional blurb explained: 'Jane Austen. . .never referred directly to the Revolution. . .[but] was profoundly affected by [it]. . .both in her thinking and writing.' Compers are asked for equally surprising titles — Hitler and the Art of Flower Arranging; Barbara Cartland and the Class Struggle — with max. 150 words of publishers' explanatory blurb. By Wednesday 31 October.

No 2841 Set by E.O. Parrott

Modern novelists' versions of the classics.

Report By Ernest Oswald fflap

No space! No space! (To paraphrase a certain anaemic little bob-tailed quadruped.) But I must just say how touched, I'm sure, would be the Amises *pater* and *filius* to know how readily they spring to the minds of those intent on pastiche. Ten sovereigns per published entry — and a message to dear Mr Bellenger: One of my colleagues says that she'd like a little *word* with you.

Vladimir Nabokov's The Old Curiosity Shop

A word. Two words. A name.

But for Quilp who, quill poised, paused in recording *ce qu'il pensait*, they were subliminal coordinates to the epicentre of his curiosity: Little Nell.

Nell. Little. He pressed down, watching as the freshly-cut bifurcation of the nib divided, holding in the gap a tacky meniscus. He wrote: 'Nell'.

The letters of her *nomen* (none?) he flowingly inscribed onto the parchment, mirroring the pen's movements with maneuvers of the tongue's tip, not parched but damp across his lips. 'N', he wrote, then 'e', the twin clarions of the seraphic syllables, 'Nymph' and 'et', then, to close (how tightly?) the senti-nel lower-case 'ells', which united into a single limpid and delicious palatal, and stood as though to guard a secret portal. But (o, pen an opening!) as he limned the translucent soubriquet, 'l-i-t-t-l-e', the guardian ells parted, just enough to admit the insertion of 'itt'. It!

GERARD BENSON

Kingsley Amis's Robinson Crusoe

Crusoe crapped copiously into the shallow hole and wiped himself inexpertly on a yellowing frond of bracken. Why couldn't the ship's chandler — drowned now, poor bugger — have stowed away a couple of crates of Izal, instead of all those sodding (and sodden) dog biscuits? He pulled up his hairy goatskin breeches and, with the air of a particularly shagged-out satyr, shambled back to the 'fort'. He tried to settle down to his latest boredom-repelling game: choosing eight absolutely definitive desert island discs. But his concentration kept wandering back to that enigmatic footprint. So he wasn't alone! There was another castaway — a companion who might share his interest in vintage jazz, or know how to dig a proper latrine. But there was a catch. The footprint had been suspiciously small. How could he be positive it didn't belong to a bloody *woman*?

PETER NORMAN

Ivy Compton-Burnett's Wuthering Heights

'There is a stranger at the gate,' said Hareton Earnshaw, at the window.

'He'd do better at someone else's,' said his cousin, Catherine Heathcliff.

Her father-in-law, the adopted son of the young people's grandfather and owner now of Wuthering Heights, looked up as Joseph, the man-servant, entered.

'Mr Lockwood of Thrushcross Grange,' announced Joseph.

'Fetch the madeira and call off the dogs,' said Heathcliff.

The master was middle-aged and swarthy, the man old and bent and the cousins even-featured, though the girl was surly, the boy shabby.

'As your tenant, I thought it right to pay you a visit,' said Lockwood.

'A tenant and his right are soon parted,' murmured Catherine to Hareton, 'and it is more than visits he must pay.'

'And a man may not covet his neighbour's wife, even when she is only a widowed daughter-in-law instead,' said Hareton, having followed Lockwood's gaze and read its meaning.

MAY DAY

Gertrude Stein's The Odyssey or the odyssey or THE ODYSSEY

Odysseus having left Ithaca where he lived with his wife Penelope and their son Telemachus and his dog Argus eventually returned to Ithaca where he found his wife Penelope and their son Telemachus and his dog Argus who was not in very good condition for Odysseus having gone off to fight the Trojan War had been gone a very long time so when he came back, sure he came back alright, well when he came back he found his wife Penelope and his son Telemachus okay if somewhat older but Argus who was older was in poor shape, that is why he licked Odysseus and died probably of happiness offhand. Argus licked Odysseus's feet not having enough spring to make Odysseus's face which wasn't too hygenic but that's Ithaca for you. Okay?

PAMELA JANE POOH

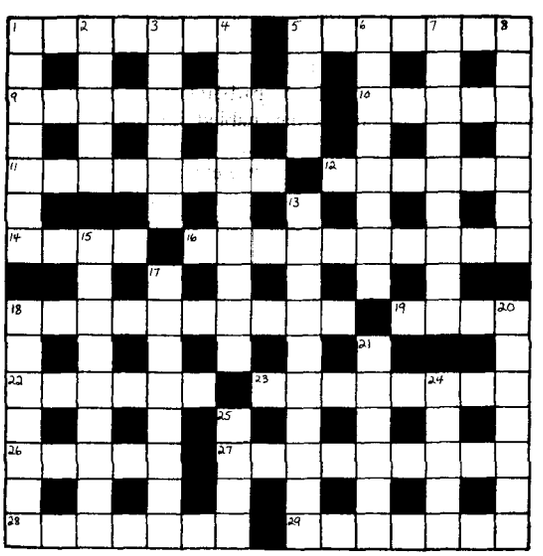
Martin Amis's Ulysses

Buck Mulligan came down the steps of the Martello Tower carrying his shaving bowl aloft. He was fat and disgusting and he knew it. Filled with self-loathing he looked down at the food stains on his filthy dressing gown and dropped the shaving bowl in a pool of spilt coffee on the breakfast table. He crossed the room to start making a grease-sodden fry-up, his head throbbing with pain and his stomach churning with nausea. 'Don't jive me, you Jesuit,' he croaked to Stephen Dedalus, the creeping aesthete who was mooning around the table reading from a snot-green copy of Swinburne's poems. As he stirred the bacon in the pan he looked down at a black louse that was crawling across his hand. With a violent motion he shook it into the smoking fat, watching it die with malicious satisfaction.

NICHOLAS MURRAY

Weekend Crossword 1457

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1457, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 30 October.



ACROSS

1. Twist around his turning vessel (7)
5. Take one's leave and make merry in town (7)
9. Overwhelmed when a single and devout woman had an assignation (9)
10. Present the treasure chest after a hundred has been removed (5)
11. Way of thinking that is goodly in a disturbance (8)
12. In the panic hang everyone in favour of revolution (6)
14. Intervals which give gravity to an afterthought (4)
16. The singularly progressive record of a great country? (6,4)
18. Impudent fellow who is a monkey among cards (10)
19. Periods in which damage seems greatest (4)
22. Courses for which we go in groups (6)
23. Tie back after a sudden movement in prison (8)
26. One is given rice pudding when it is colder (5)
27. Two getting together but both later split up (9)
28. They should stay on the rails although possibly seen holding a drink (7)
29. People who give their assent are more unusual in this paper (7)

DOWN

1. Fish which makes a politician carry the can (7)
2. There is nothing in the plot to stimulate interest (5)
3. Roy joins the French crowd (6)
4. God includes a saying on one South American (10)
5. Chatter softly but get out of breath (4)
6. The hit love song is extraordinarily comforting (8)
7. The right conclusion for crime (9)
8. Reenter freely although not from outer space (7)
13. Men entrap a single wild animal (10)
15. The Queen makes an appearance in choosing a place (9)
17. It is hard to study with a commotion going on inside (8)
18. Only a hard surface provides fair play (7)
20. Walks for street-car? (7)
21. Where gold is backed when horses are around (6)
24. Colouring matter used for decoration in mineral (5)
25. The bird needs a pound to supply proofs of innocence (4)

SETSQUARE

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Journalistic skills and working experience in newspapers or in a press office are necessary qualifications. Experience of major campaigning work will be a distinct advantage.

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For both posts the salary range is **£10,090—£11,710** (review pending), inclusive of **£1,185** London Weighting Allowance, dependent on appropriate experience in a similar capacity. The successful applicants will be Labour Party members and will be required to join the NUJ if not already in membership. Knowledge and experience of the labour movement will be of advantage to candidates for both posts.

Application forms and further details are obtainable from: **The Administrative and Personnel Officer, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT (tel. 01-703 0833)** and the closing date is **Friday, 2 November 1984.**

The Labour Party is an Equal Opportunity Employer

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New Statesman

INTERNATIONAL PHYSICIANS FOR THE PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR (IPPN)

The organising committee of the 6th IPPN WORLD CONGRESS, COLOGNE 1986 require an

ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR/ CO-ORDINATOR

The post is located in Cologne, Germany, and will run from January 1985 to June 1986. Initially the wide range of administrative and co-ordinating duties involved will take up 5 half days per week, increasing gradually to full time. It is hoped that the holder of the post will also be interested in setting up English conversation classes for members of the organising committee.

We are looking for an energetic, outgoing person with a keen interest in the nuclear debate, plus organising ability, plenty of initiative and a lively personality. Excellent English is essential, and the administrative worker will be expected to learn German to a good standard during this period.

Salary negotiable. Assistance will be given in finding suitable accommodation.

Applications and a brief c.v. should be sent to:
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Applications must be received by not later than **Friday 2 November 1984** and should be addressed to: **Monica Thompson, Assistant Secretary, The Institution of Professional Civil Servants, 75-79 York Rd., London SE1 7AQ.**

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LISTINGS

FRI 19 OCT

HOUNSLOW Miners' Benefit Dance, 8pm till late, Montague Hall, Montague Rd (tube Hounslow Central). Access/toilets for disabled. Dancing to suit all tastes to 'Village Trio'. Adm. £2/£1 UB40. **Org. Hounslow Miners Suport Cttee. 01-572 3764.**

SAT 20 OCT

LONDON Tribunal presided over by eminent barrister on Dept. of Transport's 4 Archway Inquiries. Adm Free 10.30am Jacksons Lane Community Centre, Archway Rd, N19. **Details: Programming Officer, 486 Archway Rd, N6. 01-341 4322.**

HELENSBURGH CND Peace Fair. Victoria Halls. Spkrs at 2pm. Joan Ruddock. Evening Music. Creche. **Details: Ian McDonald RHU 820719.**

GLASGOW 'Organising for Trade Union Ballots' Spkr. Peter Hain. 2pm City Halls. **Org. LCC.**

LONDON ANC International Fete, Camden Centre, Bidborough St, NW1. Disabled Toilets, Creche. **Details: ANC of South Africa, PO Box 38, 28 Penton St, N1. 01-837 2012.**

LONDON 'Options for Peace & Economic Development — Conf. on Central America. 9-5pm LSE, Houghton St, WC2. Spkrs. from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, US, Holland. Chair: Denis Healey MP. Creche if booked in advance. Adm. £10/£15 orgs./£3 membs. Lunch £3. **Org. War on Want 01-609 0211.**

LONDON 'Towards 2000' Raymond Williams leads Planning meeting & discn. 1-4pm County Hall, SE1. **Org. Socialist Society 01-734 8501.**

CARDIFF 'The Left & Media Democracy' Conf. 10am-5.30pm Joint Students Union. Cathays Pk. Adm. £1/50p UB40. Spkrs. Mike Power, NGA, Michelle Ryan. Workshops. **Org. Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom/Moving Left in Wales.**

SUN 21 OCT

LONDON Grenada Invasion — one year later. 3pm Afro-Caribbean Resource Centre, 5 Westminster Bridge Rd, SE1. Spkrs. incl. Chris Searle, Richard Hunt, Jeremy Corbyn MP, reps. from Cuba & Nicaragua. Songs/poems from Grenada. **Orgs. Britain Grenada Friendship Soc, Cttee. for Human Rights in Grenada, Caribbean Labour Solidarity, Zed Press, Liberation.**

TUES 23 OCT

ISLINGTON 'Apartheid & the British Bomb' — exposing the links between oppression and nuclear weapons — Uranium from Namibia used in Trident. 8pm Islington West Library, Bridgeman Rd, N1. Spkrs. from Campaign against Namibian Uranium and Partisans.

LONDON 'Trident — the 3-pronged Dilemma' Spkr. Chris Darke AUEW/TASS. 6.30pm County Hall, SE1. **Org. Civil Engineers for Nuclear Disarmament.**

WED 24 OCT

LONDON 'Racism in the Legal Profession' 7pm LSE, Houghton St, WC2. Rm. SO17. Adm. 50p non-membs. **Org. Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers.**

KILBURN Public Meeting on 'Trident' 7.30pm Salusbury Rd. Junior Sch., Salusbury Rd, NW6. **Org. Kilburn, Willesden & Wembley CND. 01-451 1016.**

CAMDEN 'Trident — destroyer of jobs and peace' Public Meeting. 7.30pm Camden Town Hall, Bidborough St, WC1. Spkrs. incl. Tony Benn MP, Jack Collins, Sec. Kent NUM.

BOLTON 'Anti-semitism and Immigration Controls' Spkr. Steve Cohen. 8pm Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood St (off Bradshawgate) **Org. Bolton People's History Grp.**

LONDON 'Socialism in London Series — Planning the Local Economy' 7.30pm County Hall, SE1. Spkrs. incl. Madhu Verma, Ealing CDA, Mike Best, GLEB, John Tilley, Hackney Development Project. **Details: Socialist Society 01-734 8501.**

THURS 25 OCT

LONDON 'Feminism, Psychoanalysis and the Politics of Female Self-Identity': a 24-wk. course. 7pm 28b Torrington Sq, WC1.

LONDON 'Blacks & the Labour Party — Socialists & Sections' debate between black Labour Party activists Keith Vaz & Colin de Freitas. 8pm 2 Denbigh Pl, SW1. Adm. free. **Org. City of London & Westminster South Labour Party.**

FRI 26 OCT

LONDON Haldane Society Benefit for Striking Miners 7.30-10.30pm Villa Carlotta, 33 Charlotte St, W1. Spkrs. Henry Richardson, Ray Chadburn. Cheques £10 each for reserved tickets (collect at door) to Helena Kennedy, 14 Tooks Ct, Cursitor St, EC4.

LONDON 'Mass Psychology of Thatcherism' 7.30pm Freemasons' Arms, Long Acre, WC1. Spkrs. incl. Jocelyn Chaplin. **Details: Socialist Society 01-734 8501.**

SAT 27 OCT

FRIERN BARNET 'Educating for Peace' — multi-media programme 8pm All Saints Church.

PAISLEY 'Politics & the Media' AGM & National Conf. of Modern Studies Assoc. at Paisley College. Spkrs. Alastair Hetherington, John Milne, Brian Wilson. **Registration £2 and details: Dept. of Modern Studies, Linwood High School. Johnstone 21244.**

FORTHCOMING

29 OCT N. STAFFS 'A Green & Socialist Land?' SERA Conf. 7.30pm Stoke Film Theatre, College Rd, Stoke. **Details: Jim Barrow, Stoke 810686 eves / Wolverhampton 22351 x 452 day.**

1 NOV LONDON Picket for Nicaragua 9am-7pm US Embassy, Grosvenor Sq, W1. **Details: War Resisters' International, 55 Dawes St, SE17 01-703 7189.**

3 NOV LONDON 'Left Alive' wkend of debates, interviews, forums, discns, music, dance, sport etc. Creche, stalls. Tickets: £10/£6 UB40. **Details: Mary Braithwaite, 16 St John St, EC1. 01-251 4406.**

3 NOV CAMBRIDGE 'The Human Factor in Today's Cold War' Symposium 10am. School of Pythagoras, St John's College. Fee £2/£1 students incls. lunch. Apply: Dr. Hugh Cornford, 51 Pierce La, Fulbourn, or at door. **Details: MCANW 0223 313828.**

3 NOV BRIXTON 'Namibia & the Churches' day conf. to promote awareness and action. 10.30am-4pm. St Matthew's Meeting Place, Brixton Hill, SW2. Lunch/registration £2/UB40 free. **Details: Namibia: Churches Steering Grp., 12 Goodge Pl., W1. 01-636 3061.**

3 NOV BIRMINGHAM 'Tomorrow is Ours & Tomorrow is made Today' Campaign Skills day sch. 10am-5pm. Guild of Students, University, Edgbaston Pk. Rd. **Details: 021-472 1841 (day) 021-472 1735 (eve).**

4 NOV LONDON Tom Paxton singing for El Salvador. 8pm Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Ct. Rd. **Org. El Salvador Solidarity Campaign. Pat Edlin 01-226 0975 / Duncan Green 01-359 3976.**

7 NOV LONDON 'Blocking the NATO manoeuvres'. 7.30pm 6 Endsleigh St., WC1. **Details: Theresa Sunflower McWomynus 01-980 4534.**

8 NOV LONDON 'Pedestrian rights or Motor Terrorism' Greenpeace [illegible] meeting with Cyril Myerscough of Pedestrian Assoc. 8pm 6 Endsleigh St., WC1. **Details: Greenpeace, 01-387 5370.**

8 NOV LONDON 'Whose London is it, anyway?' Join GLC Anti-Abolition Lobby of Parliament. 2.30pm Central Hall, Westminster. GLC/Metropolitan Counties Abolition Bill will be introduced in coming session of Parliament. **Details: GLC Campaign Hotline 01-633 4400.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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CONFERENCE

CENTRAL AMERICA

Options for Peace & Economic Development
Sat. 20 Oct. 9a.m.-5p.m.

Organised by **War on Want**, the **Campaign Against World Poverty**, at LSE, Houghton Street, London WC2
Speakers from: El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, USA & Europe.
Chaired by **Denis Healey MP & Lord Chitnis** £10. Organisations £15. Lunch £3.

Details 01-609 0211

MEETINGS

CAMBRIDGE Sat. 20 Oct. 2-5 p.m. A public discussion on Why the Parthenon Marbles Belong to Greece. Organised by the Archaeological Review from Cambridge and the British Committee for the Restitution of the Parthenon Marbles. Speakers: Prof. Robert Browning, Mr Graham Binns and the playwright Brian Clark. Introduced by Mr Peter Gathercole. Place: Department of Classics, Sidgwick Ave.

LCC CENTENARY History Group. Unitary London Government: Nuisance or Necessity? Debate initiated by Ken Young, Policy Studies Institute. Monday 22 Oct. 6 p.m. Adm. free. *Institute of Historical Research, Senate House.*

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public talk Sunday 21 Oct. 8 p.m. 'The Root of All Religions'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

SEMINAR

German Historical Institute, London
Tuesday 23 Oct, 5 p.m.
Dr Christoph Buchheim (Munich)
German Exports of Manufactures to Great Britain in the second half of the 19th Century: Significance and Causes
17 Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2LP
01-404 5486
Tea from 4.30 p.m.
Seminar starts 5 p.m.

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AMIABLE, INTELLIGENT man, 31, armchair Marxist, likes books, films, pubs and idle gossip, seeks articulate, humorous woman for company, friendship, even love. Bristol area. Box 9384.

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ATTRACTIVE WOMAN, 40, *slim,* 5'5", socialist, sensitive and thoughtful feminist, interested in politics, environment, the inner city, natural science, philosophy, cinema, music and animals, going out and about and enjoying domestic pleasures; has enjoyable job, imperfect but comfortable flat, garden, car, mostly solvent, likes children; seeks man with whom to share things in warmth and mutual consideration. London. Box 9468.

BILLY, 44, atheist, lovelorn frisky farmer, single, desires friendship/correspondence/ *meetings with young, frisky lady with initiative,* who's itching for some affectionate attention. Among other interests I enjoy, are naturism, dancing, reading, secularism, travel, scuba diving, photography, swimming, biking, walks and camping. N. Ireland/anywhere. Box 9370

BISEXUAL MARRIED academic (48), working Germany, recorder player, theatre, walking, talking, seeks permanent young friend (over 21), London, Cambridge, Norwich, for frequent visits to England. Box 9446.

BLACK FEMALE, Birmingham, divorcée, likes performing arts, good conversation, seeks permanent male companionship from person with youngish outlook and sense of humour, under 40. Box 9459.

CANADIAN WRITER
warm, pleasant looking, world-travelled, well-educated, complex, subtle, sensitive and eclectic. Amateur jazz musician who likes reading, history, archaeology, flea markets and walking in the bleak places, seeks woman to share — by correspondence, telephone and/or meeting. 21-45ish (probably 30ish). Thames near Henley.
Box 9480

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'7/DAY/' 24 hrs. ACM-Address Unlimited Mail. £1 mth, discounts 3 mths £2.50, 6 mths £4.50, 1 yr £8.25. M. Abrahams, 15 Clifton Gardens, London N15. 01-800 0373.

FORMER JOURNALIST, warm-hearted, male law student, 30s, seeks female sympathiser or fellow sufferer, for mutual support. Age *immaterial. Central London based.* Box 9469.

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FROM THE wild North (Tyneside actually!). I'm David, 1945 vintage Sagittarian male, artistic inclinations and single (guilty party). Ladies with understanding disposition invited to share my guilty secrets. Box 9491.

HAPPY PROFESSIONAL male, 31, in caring profession, who likes people, music and conversation, seeks lady for mutually caring relationship. West Glamorgan but will travel. Box 9473.

IF YOU'RE MALE, 38-45, went to grammar school, pursue an arts career, are generous, probably drink, smoke, aren't especially political, please write to female much same. Box 9483.

JEWISH GENTLEMAN, unemployed, sincere, reliable, fit, healthy 59. Divorced and Continental born. Wishes meet refined, solvent lady. No affairs, view marriage only. Box 9456.

JOHN, A LONDON based back-packer, is 38 *but still rambling. He seeks a female walking* companion to share autumn strolls and summer expeditions. Box 9471.

LINGUIST, 50, single, Middle-East origin, Jewish, wide interests, own house/car, seeks lady with faith, 35/45, for sharing and caring. Genuine. Box 9488.

LIVELY, DIVORCED man, young 52, prof. job, gardening, walking, arts, food, wine, France. CND supporter, politically left, seeks active, warm woman partner. Pool resources for early *retirement?* Box 9484.

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MALE, 36, interested in Shivambu Kalpa (urine therapy) seeks female with same interest. Reading, Berks. Box 9450.

MENAGE-A-TROIS in pastoral setting is achievable dream! Me domesticated, slightly dissident, slim, 53/5'10", smokeless, creative, sexy, pagan Robinson Crusoe, seeking menopausal lifemates! Box 9485.

NON-SEXIST (I HOPE!) male, 29, living one hour from London, seeks female who also needs someone who cares. Into theatre, CND and erratic vegetarianism. Box 9457.

NON-SMOKING SINGLE atheist, socialist writer seeks beautiful, unattached, childless girlfriend (perferably unemployed), living in London or Hull for long, luxurious Mediterranean holiday. Photograph essential. Box 9455.

GAY MAN, graduate, socialist, 26, disabled, lives in London, interested in politics, history and cinema, wishes to meet sensitive man (over 21), perhaps slightly lonely. Photograph appreciated. Box 9408.

QUIET, TIDY, self sufficient, single male 30, seeks compatible lady, 25-35, preferably intelligent but not intellectual, tolerant and good-humoured, to share life, home etc. Box 9405.

PROFESSIONAL, SUCCESSFUL, good-looking, divorced man, 45, own house and car, with passion for arts, sunny places and tennis, seeks relationship with warm, sensitive female, 28 to 40, London; photo. Box 9466.

SCOTLAND – MALE academic, 60, divorced; addicted to compassion, irreverence, active recreations — sociable but not hearty, wishes to contact woman needing similar companionship. Only first name/phone no. if *anonymity preferred.* Box 9458.

SENSITIVE, CONSIDERATE North London man, early fifties, divorced, broad interests but socially unskilled, seeks female company. Box 9389.

SINGLE MOTHER, 40, understanding, lively-minded, seeks professional male with cultural enthusiasms, her age approx. to restore balance of child-bound lifestyle. Lives East Anglia. Box 9454.

TALL, SLIM, attractive widow (49), living North London, seeks companionship of kind, considerate, successful man to share cultural pursuits and a loving relationship. Box 9461.

UK PENFRIEND, fiftyish, single, graduate, sense of humour, invited by cheerful, chatty, apolitical, English doctor (widower). Please *write: Briley, Poste Restante, Rondebosch* 7700, RSA.

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VERY MYOPIC male, Ametropic, 55, Anglophile, American, literate, lettered, travelled, unencumbered, seeks female with similar opthalmological malady for commiseration, mutuality, association, direction etc. Box 9372.

WARM, SPIRITED, 'cosmopolitan woman, multifarious interests, employed offers friendship, weekend companionship to intelligent, cultured, sensitive man, unattached, youthful, over 55, easy-going, humorous. London. Box 9492.

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